

Window on Jordan

By Itisam Awadat
Star Staff Writer
THE NEWS that some catfish had recently died as a result of the malfunction very quickly became headline news. The story was published on the front page of one daily newspaper.

The Ministry of Water and Irrigation (MWI) was compelled to use the catfish, after the publication of reports that our water contained extensive amounts of algae and dead larvae—the main food for the catfish.

This innovative method was said to have come from Israel. The Israelis, we are told, breed catfish in

water reservoirs to get rid of plants, weeds and other organic material.

What's next, I wonder. If the fish couldn't survive in our water, what are the chances of human survival? said one citizen, sarcastically.

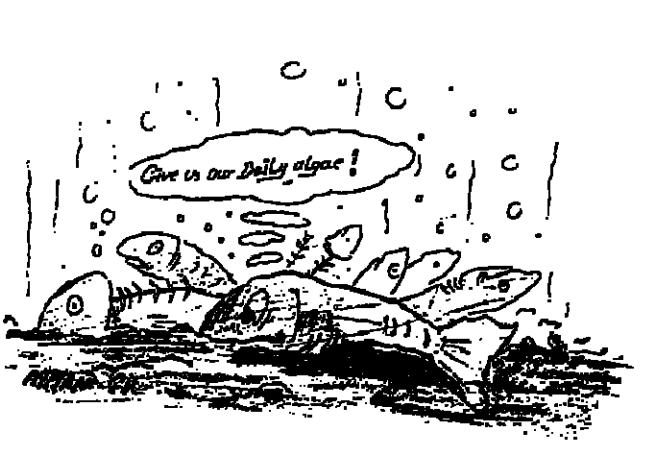
Despite the assurances received from the Ministry that our water is now free from chemicals, officials still have a lot of explaining to do. Although the new government claims to be ready for all the coming challenges, they still can't explain why fish die in clean water!

Minister of Water Hani Mulqi even drank a glass of water from the Zai Water Treatment Plant, during

a tour for the local and foreign media. He assured the press that the pumping of clean water was back under control.

The explanation for the passing away of the fish was also provided by Mulqi. "It's completely natural, and it doesn't prove that there is something wrong in the water," he said. "The ministry is observing the rest of the fish, on a daily basis," he added. Unfortunately, it seems that no one at Ministry can stop the suicidal tendencies of the fish!

Mulqi added that the shortage of larva and the



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The Star

Jordan's political, economic and cultural weekly

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اسبوعية سياسية مستقلة

Syrian-Turkish tensions reach critical mass

By Ghassan Joha and news agencies
THE LONG running political dispute between Syria and Turkey reached critical mass last week. The tension was sparked by the mass settlement of Turkish troops on the border with Syria, a move which Turkey said was necessary to curb the cross-border attacks by the Kurdish Labor Party (PKK) rebels.

Ankara accuses its southern neighbor of providing refuge to the PKK rebels, and to their leader Abdullah Ocalan, who have been fighting since 1984 to gain more autonomy for the Kurdish population in southeast Turkey. Turkey also accused Lebanon of sheltering the PKK rebels in the parts under Syrian control.

Syria has denied the charge, and in turn, accused Turkey of forming a military alliance with Israel that threatens Arab security. It views the latest escalation as a joint Israeli-Turkish plot to undermine its sovereignty.

Arab countries, together with Iran, have been supportive of

Syrian fears against the 1996 Israeli-Turkish military accord, which could derail the Middle East peace process and trigger instability in the region. The 25th anniversary of the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, which passed last week, did not help matters.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said last month that Israel would not get involved in the crisis. Lebanon, on the other side, insisted that there have been no PKK bases on their land for 18 months now, and called Turkey's charges "unjustifiable and disturbing."

Both Turkey and Syria were also at odds over the sharing of water from the Euphrates River. Damascus has often condemned Turkish plans to build dams on the river, which is considered to be a key source of water for Syria.

The majority of Arab nations have called on both countries to end their dispute, and resolve the conflict peacefully. Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak held intensive talks with leaders from both countries, during the past week, in an attempt to



The war of words continues between Syria and Turkey

Farouq Al Share' said earlier that his government was puzzled at the timing of the Turkish accusations, as nothing had changed on the issue of the PKK, and he linked the escalation to the Turkish military cooperation with Israel.

Turkish Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz said later he was giving Syria a final warning to stop what he called its support for the PKK rebels, and urged his Syrian counterpart to reply immediately.

Around 10,000 Turkish soldiers crossed into northern Iraq last week. The move set a precedent, and warned the Syrians that a similar fate awaited them if they failed to eradicate their PKK guerrilla bases. The Turkish army has been relatively successful in fighting the rebels and forcing them back into the Iraqi territory.

The Egyptian President was handed a list of six Turkish demands for Syria, which included closing PKK camps, ceasing support to the rebels, an immediate surrender of Ocalan, stopping rebel excursions across the border, and for Syria to recognize Turkish sovereignty in the Hazy province. Syria has made a historical claim for this area of land, largely due to its sizable Arab population.

Jordanian officials have expressed concern about the deteriorating relations between Syria and Turkey. HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, urged Mr. Demirel to find a peaceful solution, and to clear up the crisis using diplomatic channels. The Regent also conveyed His Majesty King Hussein's deep concern to Mr. Demirel, who wished for good neighborly relations between the two Muslim countries.

For his part, Mr. Demirel said Turkey will no longer be silent on the PKK terrorist operations, adding that the world must realize the high human toll of "their terrorist operations against the Turkish people."

On Tuesday, the Lower House issued a statement urging both Syria and Turkey to pursue the diplomatic means, and to avoid any military confrontation. It praised Jordan's stance, which called for maximum cooperation and solidarity

Albright seeks modest progress in Mideast talks

By Thomas W. Lippman
JERICHO—Like the legendary Ohio State football coach Woody Hayes, whose grind-it-out style of play was known as "three yards and a cloud of dust," Secretary of State Madeleine Albright is looking for incremental gains as she prods and pushes the leaders of Israel and the Palestinians towards a new agreement.

In meetings with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Jerusalem, and with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat in this sun-baked town Tuesday afternoon, she doggedly pursued a modest objective: agreement on enough of the remaining points of difference to make a deal possible at a Washington summit later this month.

She may yet succeed—she is scheduled to meet with the two leaders together in Gaza on Wednesday morning—but neither she nor her spokesman, James Rubin, reported progress on any specific issue.

"I certainly think she was encouraged that both leaders are getting down to business," Rubin said. "But we'll have to see whether the right mood, the right atmosphere and the goodwill that she experienced is enough to begin to make concrete agreements on the various pieces of this puzzle that we have to put together." He said "dozens" of issues remain to be resolved.

In a sign of how difficult that could be, Netanyahu's office Tuesday announced that Israel will push forward with plans to replace mobile homes with permanent structures for Jewish settlers living in the divided West Bank city of Hebron. Albright, who has called for a "time-out" on Israeli settlement-building in the West Bank, declined comment on the latest settler project in Hebron.

Albright described Tuesday's talks as "very useful," but she also said after meeting both leaders, using the same words, that "time is not on our side. If we do not move quickly, we may find ourselves without a process of peace-making, without an agreement



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (L) and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat shake hands as they are joined by United States Secretary of State Madeleine Albright at the start of tri-lateral talks in the Israeli Civil Administration headquarters along the border with the Gaza Strip October 7. Israel set expectations low ahead of the meeting, saying Palestinians had yet to deliver on the key issue of Israeli security.

Extraordinary session is a legal possibility, politicians argue

By Ghassan Joha and news agencies
A CONSTITUTIONAL session is a legal possibility, politicians argue. The session would be convened by the President of the Syrian Arab Republic, Hafez Assad, to discuss the crisis between Syria and Turkey.

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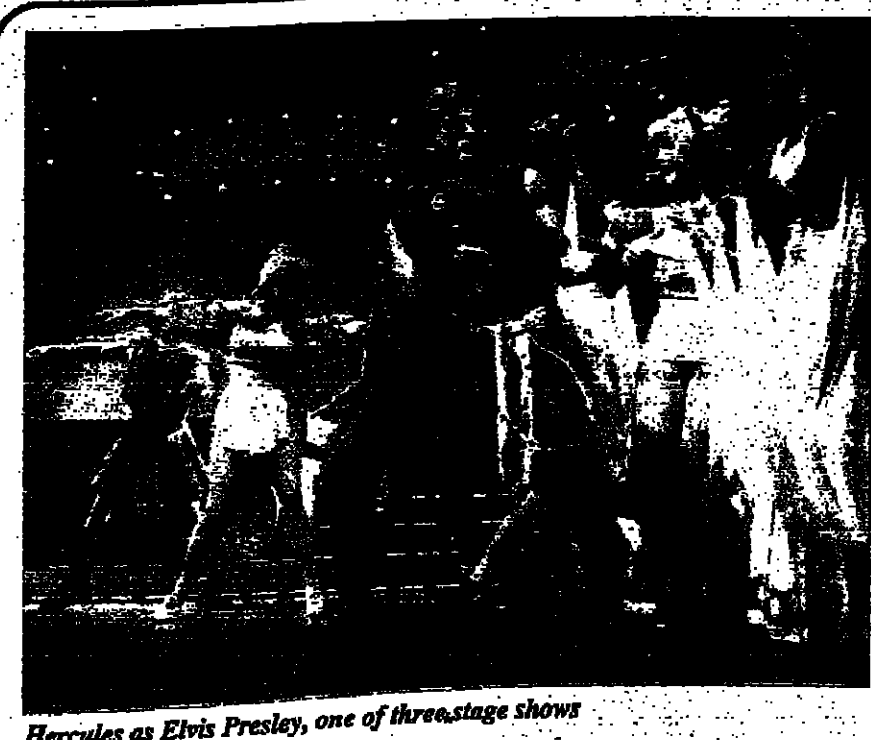
and without the hope of achieving an Israeli-Palestinian peace."

With that comment, Albright showed how the horizons of Middle East peacemaking have narrowed. Three years ago, it appeared that Israel and the Palestinians had in fact achieved peace, and the Clinton administration was pursuing the prospect of a comprehensive regional accord that would include Syria and Lebanon, putting an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Now Albright is trying to nudge Israel and the Palestinians toward implementation of agreements previously reached, focusing not on grand visions of regional comity but on incremental changes in dug-in positions. Albright promised on her first trip to Israel as Secretary of State 13 months ago, not to keep returning just to "read water," but little has changed since then except for a general hardening of attitudes.

The US goal now is to persuade both sides to accept a US-drafted plan calling for Israel to withdraw from a further 13 percent of the West Bank, which Israel captured in the 1967 war. In exchange, the Palestinians would be expected to redouble their efforts to combat terrorism. If such an agreement is concluded at the upcoming Washington meeting, the United States would press both sides to engage seriously in "final-status" talks on the most sensitive issues dividing them, such as the future of Jerusalem and the return of Palestinian refugees.

Under the Oslo agreement between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, those final-status talks are due to conclude on May 4, which is why Albright stressed the need for haste. She also called on both sides to refrain from "unilateral acts"—a euphemism for construction of Jewish settlements on land claimed by the Palestinians—and "unilateral statements" about what they might do if that deadline is not met, a reference to Arafat's past threats to declare an independent Palestinian state if the May 4 deadline passes without a final agreement.



The happiest ship on earth Aboard the Disney magic

By Scott Kraft
ABOARD THE DISNEY MAGIC—Like many parents, my wife, Betsy, and I have found that family vacations fall roughly into two categories: a stimulating trip for us accompanied by grumbling children, or a fun time for the kids that leaves us exhausted and dreaming of home.

Disney's new cruise ship, the Disney Magic, seemed the perfect compromise.

Unfortunately, that view wasn't shared by my wife, who is ordinarily among the most adventurous of travelers. Neither of us had ever taken a cruise, and the very idea struck Betsy as vacation torture. Stuck on a boat? With "Under the Sea" playing around the clock?

The ship certainly seemed to offer plenty of stuff to do: three pools, four restaurants, a cafeteria, an ESPN Skybox, four nightclubs, musicals and movies. In addition, both the three-night and four-

night cruises out of Florida featured day-long stops in Nassau and Castaway Cay, Disney's own private island. (The longer sailing adds a day at sea.)

But the prospect of being cooped up with 2,000 people on a ship—even an 85,000-ton one powered by five 16-cylinder diesel engines and Disney's finest pixie dust—sounded like jail.

My curiosity prevailed, and we booked a three-night cruise.

So on a recent muggy Friday morning, we headed out of Orlando airport on a bus. In just under an hour, we arrived at Port Canaveral and got our first glimpse of the Disney Magic.

The ship is a truly magnificent sight. It bears an unsettling resemblance to the Titanic, and that's no accident. The design recalls the era of grand old ocean liners, with two large red smokestacks (only one is used for exhaust), a long and narrow

black hull and large round portholes.

Then there are the Disney touches: the giant Mickey Mouse symbol on the smokestacks; a 20-foot-tall statue of Goofy hanging off the aft deck, seeming to paint the finishing touches on the gold trim; and a grand horn that announces departures and arrivals with blasts of the first seven notes of "When You Wish Upon a Star."

Disney insisted that the lifeboats, which international maritime law dictates be orange, instead be painted gold—to match the ship's color scheme. Disney won an exemption; the boats are gold.

Hearing the hall filled with Disney tunes, I worried about what we were getting ourselves into. It has been several years since I last visited a Disney theme park, but I still catch myself humming the dreaded "It's a Small World."

I checked in while Betsy, Kate, 9, and

Kevin, 7, posed for photographs with Disney characters who roamed the terminal.

We boarded shortly after noon, stepping into the ship's three-story atrium lobby, with its sweeping staircase anchored by a made-for-photographing statue of Mickey at a ship's wheel. The ship's interior, from stern to stem, is tasteful and luxurious, with fine carpeting and teak trim, and the walls are covered with framed artists' sketches of scenes and characters from Disney features.

Our midship stateroom had a queen bed and a sitting area with a sofa/twin bed and a second twin that dropped from the ceiling to create bunk beds. Disney says 73 percent of its staterooms have outside views, and well more than half of those have private verandas, as did ours.

We booked the fifth priciest out of 12 cabin categories, paying \$2,178 (including air fare). But that was half the going rate because Disney slashed prices for the many passengers who, like us, had been bumped twice by ship construction delays. (No one at Disney knew we were aboard to write about the cruise for the Los Angeles Times, which paid our expenses.)

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Hercules as Elvis Presley, one of three stage shows

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Marrying foreign women

What do the spouses think

Lubna Khader
Star Staff Writer

RAMZI IS A LITTLE clever 10 year-old kid, who happens to live in two different cultures: he was born in America, but today lives in Jordan. Ramzi's father is a well-known Jordanian economist, and his mother is an American teacher.

"My son quickly adapted to the two environments, here and America," said Dr Yusef Mansour, the father.

"When we came to Jordan he couldn't speak Arabic very well, so we put him in an Arabic school to learn the language and interact with his environment," added Dr Mansour, who met his wife at the University of Oklahoma, USA, whilst studying. After a brief courtship, they decided to get married.

"I never intended to return to the Kingdom, but during one of our visits with my wife [Brenda], we liked the place so much," added Dr Mansour. "That's why we finally decided to return for good."

His father and mother welcomed his return after 20 years of living in the States.

"I didn't face any trouble here, because my husband's family are well educated," Brenda said, adding that Jordanians like foreigners and

treat them well. "My husband's support also proved a tower of strength."

"My family accepted Brenda right from the start. This took a lot off my shoulders, because at first I used to be away from home for a long time. Mansour told *The Star* that he now lives apart from his family, as this gives his wife a lot more room to be independent."

Both husband and wife have working careers, so they are out during the day and only meet up in the evenings, where they catch up on social relations like visiting relatives and close friends. They have many friends who have married a partner from abroad.

"We like to meet each other because we are living under the same conditions," Brenda commented. She added that she never feels lonely, and visits her parents in the States every year.

Meanwhile, their only son, Ramzi, feels very comfortable and has quickly integrated into the Jordanian environment.

"I like computer games very much and share them with my aunt's children," said Ramzi innocently, who now speaks both Arabic and English fluently.

A second Jordanian family, a Russian mother and an Arabic

father, are experiencing similar conditions.

"We met in Russia when we were studying at the same university," said Olia Bseiso, a creative artist who turned her house into a fine exhibition hall for handicrafts.

"I like to paint on glass and make sculptures, especially ones which have a Palestinian flavor," Mrs Bseiso says. She added that her family is the most important thing. Her son Mahdi is a creative student who has received many prizes.

"He was the first person to create a computer site, introducing Jordan to the world in different languages. He is currently staying in the United States, after passing difficult exams, and he has won a scholarship. My daughter Dalia, has musical interests and has been classified as one of the best piano players in the Kingdom," the proud mother added.

The interaction between the members of this family is smooth. "My mother talks to me sometimes in Russian, and I answer in Arabic," Dalia says. "The mixture of language has not affected me. On the contrary, I can now speak French, Russian, English, as well as Arabic."

However, some foreign women lamented that even after spending a

long time in the country, they were still considered as foreigners. "Jordanian society believes that foreign women are not serious, and are not responsible for their families," said Paula Nabeel, an Italian who has been married to a Jordanian for the last 29 years.

She still faces problems because of her religion. "People still wonder why I'm still a Christian. My husband is a Muslim, but we live together and each respects the other's religion," Paula added.

She has three children. "It was very difficult to raise them in two different cultures, and with two different languages. Sometimes, I see things from my point of view, whilst the children see it differently," Mrs Nabeel added.

Meanwhile, Dr Ezzat Al Nawajah met his wife, Dr Anna, like the previous couples, when they were studying in Russia. Dr Anna said she likes Jordan. Her only complaint however, is that the weather is too hot. From experience, she believes that women can combine a good career with being a good mother.

"We respect all religions. I am a Christian, while my husband is a Muslim," However, she said there is still a need for greater integration, which can only be achieved through greater cultural interaction.

Syrian-Turkish tensions reach critical mass

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among all countries in the region.

Analysis says that the Turkish army leaders want to bring back the country's pride in the region, after their rejection from the European Union. Analysts view the Turkish military activity as exaggerated, and can see a space for diplomatic dialogue.

The problem has arisen because there is a power struggle between the hard-liners in the Turkish Army, and the government," one political analyst was quoted as saying.

Most foreign observers think the Turkish decision to step up pressure on Syria stems from fears that the Kurds will soon

make a bid for independence, undermining Ankara's influence over the region. The US said earlier that any military action would expose the whole region to the "grave risk of a much larger conflict."

Turkey has expressed concern over the peace accord, which was signed in Washington last month, by the two Kurdish factions who run northern Iraq. Ankara thinks that such an accord is the first step towards an independent Kurdistan. The next few weeks will be decisive, and it is hoped that both Syria and Turkey will come to their senses, and that the escalation remains in words only.

Extraordinary session is a legal possibility, politicians argue

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King Talal," Kharabsheh added.

"The conditions then were different from what they are now. Then medical reports suggested that King Talal couldn't assume his authorities," said Dr Abdallah Nagrash, a Political Science professor at the University of Jordan. Following the reports, "a custody council" was formed as HM King Hussein wasn't able to assume his constitutional position because he was below the

age of 18," Dr Nagrash told *The Star*. Meanwhile, if a third extraordinary session is convened, there would be two alternatives for members of Parliament. Either to extend the (four months) period mentioned in the Constitution or handover the power of holding and dissolving the parliamentary sessions to His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent.

"Concerning the powers delegated to the Regent, this isn't detailed in the constitution, so we don't have a clear idea on this issue," Nagrash explained.

"The days following the recovery of His Majesty, and his return to the Kingdom, will be happy ones for the Jordanian people, who will hold mass celebrations," said Dr Nagrash. The King is expected to be in the Kingdom before the end of the four-month period.

Parliament will be convened two weeks after the return of the King. This is to allow all Jordanians the chance to express their feelings of love and support towards their leader.

For the Record

Regent meets with Martinez
AMMAN (Petra)—His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, met the President of the International Parliamentary Union (IPU), Miguel Martinez, on Monday. Martinez is currently on a regional tour of the Middle East. The talks focused on the European efforts to unlock the stalled peace process. The Regent stressed the need to mobilize every effort, to reach a breakthrough in the stalled peace talks, with a view to establishing a just and comprehensive peace that guarantees the rights of all people in the region. Prince Hassan and Martinez also discussed steps to establish a parliamentary council to fight "Islamophobia"—a proposal put forward by the Regent. Prince Hassan underlined the need to combat this phenomenon at all levels, by highlighting the true Islam and its tolerant principles. The talks also covered cementing Jordan's relations with Europe in cultural, political and economic fields. Martinez appreciated the Jordanian efforts to realize peace in the region, and for greater cooperation with EU member states.

Unionists praise the Government

AMMAN (Petra)—Labour unionists hailed on Monday the Government's latest steps to organize the Jordanian labor market, fight unemployment and alleviate poverty. The chairman of the Federation of Jordan's Labor Unions, Mazen Ma'niah, observed that those seeking work should be given all the cooperation that they require. Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh announced last week new measures to deal with unemployment, especially the matter relating to illegal aliens in Jordan. On the other hand, the chairman of the Bank Employees, Halder Rashid, called for activating Article 52 of the current Labor Law, that limits the minimum wage for workers.

Murder in Zai!

Continued from page 1

algae is the main reason behind the death of these poor creatures. However, this method was criticized by Lower House deputy, Salameh Al Hiari, rapporteur of the Water and Agriculture Committee. "As far as I know, this type of fish needs to eat algae and larva for a period of six hours a day. The water in Zai is not resident in the reservoirs, which means that there is not enough algae in the water for the catfish, as it is constantly moving through the pipes to the consumers," he added.

However, Al Hiari would not care to provide any alternatives. On the contrary, he refused to comment on Mulqi's declaration that the water crisis was over.

"I sympathize with those innocent creatures, whose bad destiny threw them in the Zai," Rashed Shreef, an Amman citizen, said. "This is a bad start for the new ministry, and it's

certainly a bad omen for Jordanians."

A group of university students found the fish issue an amusing subject for jokes. "I think the fish are very loyal to their homeland, Israel. That's why they died of homesickness. It's a matter of patriotism," a student commented. Meanwhile, one official mockingly told *The Star*, "I think that all the fish living in Zai are females, so how about importing some male fish to have some social balance there?"

It seems that water in Jordan is drinkable. The problem is convincing the catfish, who are skeptical of the government's declarations! *The Star* recommends that some government officials should spend a day swimming in the Zai. Not only would it be good exercise for them, it would be a great public relations exercise as well. Mind you, watch out for those homesick catfish!

World Health Organization report

AMMAN (Petra)—A report provided by the World Health Organization (WHO) affirmed the sound procedures of the Health Ministry in receiving, storing, distributing and inoculating the diphtheria and tetanus vaccines. A health scare occurred last week when around 500 school children were hospitalized complaining of nausea and dizziness, after being vaccinated for diphtheria and tetanus in the course of a nationwide inoculation campaign. In all, 25,744 students were inoculated in the immunization campaign. During a press conference held on Tuesday, the Minister of Health Na'el Ajlouni, presented to journalists two copies of the WHO report, in Arabic

and English, prepared by WHO expert Al Gharebi Al Hwari. The investigation was carried out to determine the real cause behind the incident. Ajlouni also distributed a copy of a report from Cyprus, which highlighted a similar case. There, 48 out of 140 students were hospitalized after receiving the same vaccine. The same symptoms were suffered, and the victims were hospitalized for three days. Ajlouni said the vaccines in Cyprus were manufactured in Switzerland, unlike the vaccines used in Jordan, which were manufactured by a Hungarian company and donated by the UN Children Fund (UNICEF).

Aboard the Disney Magic

Continued from page 1

Although Disney says its staterooms are 30 percent larger than the industry average, at 268 square feet, ours still seemed small for four people. But it did have two separate bathroom spaces, one with a toilet and sink and the other with a bath/

shower and sink—a smart idea, from 8:30 a.m. until mid-night (and 1 a.m. one night), I

In the stateroom we found an was inclined to agree. 18-page "Personal Navigator." It Betsy and I discovered listed shopping, entertainment another bright side to being on- and restaurant options, along lined to a cruise ship—it gave us with an hour-by-hour break the peace of mind to let our kids down of children's activities, room beyond our sight. While Mastering this document ate up we slipped strawberry daiquiris a couple of precious hours over on deck, Kate and Kevin luxuriated the first two days. I sure wished I was in kid heaven, munching on I had had it during the flight to free pizza at Pinocchio's, hot Orlando, or even during the bus dogs and hamburgers at Pluto's ride over.

The public address system Disney Magic (and, coming began its announcements with next year, the Disney Wonder) is the words: "Good afternoon, banking on travelers' willing-ladies and gentlemen, boys and nesses to pay handsomely for this girls!" We headed for the stateroom. Appealing to a centerpiece of the Disney Magic broad range of ages may hold kids' programs—the Oceaneer the key. Kids ages 13 to 17 Club, for ages 3 to 8, and the packed the teen-only club, Oceaneer Lab, for ages 9 to 12. Common Grounds. The young-Kate and Kevin fell instantly est children, those under 3, in love with their respective seemed delighted with the music-club. Each received a bar-coded cal shows and Mickey-shaped wristband, and we were issued a wading pool.

paper so that the counselors Although one wing of the ship was devoted to entertainment for could contact us.

"This," Kate declared, "is a adults, only the club Officer, and its very talented quartet of Looking at the hours of opera-comedians, consistently played

to packed houses. The ship has no casino, but adults could gamble in Nassau, and the ship didn't leave port until 3 a.m.

We had heard all about cruise ship dining—even glutiny. Our eating-began at Pinocchio's, a gorgeous and festive Caribbean-style restaurant. The pina colodas, recommended by our servers Rob, from Australia, and Maria, from Sweden, were terrific. The food was so-so, but the service was energetic and unfailingly friendly.

Passengers are rotated among three main restaurants for dinner but keep the same servers at each new dining room. The kids loved their menu—a folder marked "Top Secret" that was kept by the waiters and returned each evening with a new array of puzzles and games.

The next night, we passed on taking our table at Lumiere's, a French restaurant where jackets are required for men (and collared shirts are a good idea for children). Instead, Kate and Kevin ate with their fellow Oceaneers in the cafeteria, and

Betsy and I dined at Palo, a restaurant on board only for group-ups.

Getting a reservation at Palo had tested our patience. Bookings had to be made in person; when we arrived before the ship set sail, we joined a queue of 70 people that snaked through the restaurant to a table where the maître d' sat, godfather-like, granting favors.

Fortunately, the Italian food, prepared by a Sicilian chef and served by chatty young Italian waiters, was exquisite: pasta shells with shaved Parmesan, marinated eggplant with goat cheese, succulent sea bass on risotto and a good wine list. The experience was more than worth the \$5-per-person cover charge—and we didn't even have to pay a baby-sitter.

Our last dinner at Animator's Palate, was a remarkable show in itself. As the meal begins, everything in the dining room is black and white, from the drawings of Disney scenes on the walls to tablecloths and waiter vests that look as if black paint has been splattered on them. As the meal progresses, the room slowly comes to life with color. It was, indeed, magical.

After dinner, we had our choice of more entertainment. Each evening offered a new performance of a family musical with Disney themes and Broadway-quality actors in the 1,040-seat theater.

One evening, we joined families at Studio Sea for karaoke night and later hung out at the ESPN Skybox, located high in the unused smokestack, watching baseball games and a golf tournament on the two big-screen and six small-screen TVs.

The Magic's last port of call, Castaway Cay, is a 3-by-2-mile island that Disney acquired and turned into a resort exclusively for its cruise ship passengers. It has separate family, teen and adult beaches with hundreds of umbrellas and lounge chairs, a wide lagoon, several bars, a tram, and bike and walking paths.

We rented snorkeling equipment, at the steep cost of \$93 for the four of us. The snorkeling was not the best in the Bahamas, but it was good enough for beginners like us. After two hours, we lined up for a buffet lunch of barbecued ribs, fish and hamburgers. Later we rented kayaks (\$6 for half an hour) and cruised the lagoon, enjoying the gentle breeze.

We were disappointed when the advertised "day" at Castaway Cay ended at 3 p.m. and we were hustled back. After spending 18 hours the previous day in Nassau, only 6 hours at the beautiful little island left us wanting more.

Early the next morning—and too soon for us—we were back at Port Canaveral, clearing customs and boarding buses bound for the Orlando airport.

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JORDAN

WEEK



An unconventional report on Jordanian news and views edited by Marwan Al Asmar

Cases of corruption

Minister of Information Naser Judeh revealed that the Anti-Corruption Directorate found 51 new cases of irregularities in state departments. These include cases of tax evasion and forgery. The Minister said that 37 people had been sent to the public prosecutor. He said two companies tried to evade its responsibilities of paying taxes. One had overbills of up to JD 3 million, and the other JD 1 million.

Foreign labor

There are 1 million foreign workers in Jordan, Minister of Interior Nayer Al Qadi said earlier this week. This is indeed a revelation. He said they include 400,000 Egyptians, 130,000 Syrians, and between 120,000 and 160,000 Iraqis. The Minister said that foreign workers now have two weeks (which can be extended to a month) to put their papers in order. The implication is that, if they don't, there will be mass deportations. As a result, up to 56,000 workers flocked to the concerned ministries last week to rectify their legal status in the country, whilst this week, 62,000 workers came forward.



Al Qadi

Shiblat out

Leith Shiblat is expected to be freed today, Thursday 8 October, after serving a prison sentence of eight months. Shiblat was incarcerated last February for allegedly inciting the Ma'an demonstrations in support of Iraq.

Visit

Minister of Information Naser Judeh said that the Jordanian families of prisoners in Israeli jails will be able to visit their sons in Ashkelon prison on 20 October. Mr Judeh said the Israeli government has allowed two relatives from each family to visit their sons. Mr Omar Al Refai, Jordanian Ambassador in Tel Aviv, said the Jordanian Embassy would cover the expenses for the visits. There are currently 14 Jordanian inmates in Israeli prisons.

Gang caught

Well informed sources in the Public Security Dept., said they recently arrested a gang involved in forging official identity documents like passports and car licenses, according to *Ad Dussour*. The gang, operated from the Syrian border. Newspaper reports suggested that the gang was supported by one of the Palestinian opposition groups based in Syria. The resources say the gang included four members, one of whom rented a car from one of the tourism offices in Amman, as well as an office in Amman for the forgery business. When it was time to pay rent for the office, the man fled and the owner called the police. After further investigation, it was found that the members of the gang had also stolen cars, changed their number plates, and shipped them back to Syria.

Cabinet condemns Syrian statement

AMMAN (Petra)—The cabinet condemned the recent statements from the Syrian Minister of Defense, which were offensive to Jordan and the Jordanian people. During the session, which was presided by Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh, the cabinet condemned the statements of Syrian Minister of Defense Mustafa Tlass, regarding the Jordanian role in the October 1973 war. Tlass's statements said that Jordan had prevented the Saudi Army from reaching the battle field. Nasser Judeh, the Information Minister, reiterated that Jordan had helped the Saudi forces to pass through Jordan. The cabinet rejected all the allegations against Jordan, and hoped that future statements of this nature would cease.

Journalists

The issue of the lawsuits against journalists is again under the spotlight this week. They are being taken up by the rapporteur of the Public Liberties Committee of the Lower House, Mohammad Al Azaydeh. He has already sent a memo to Prime Minister Fayez Al Tarawneh suggesting that more than 50 cases against journalists be dropped. A memo was also sent by the rapporteur to the Justice Minister Jawdat Al Sbool.



Azaydeh

French food experts in Jordan

Food industry experts from France presented working papers on food manufacturing, packaging and storing during a workshop held at the Higher Council of Science and Technology (HCST). The working papers focused on advanced technologies in manufacturing and storing meats, liquids and other food products. The French experts are part of a delegation currently on a visit to Jordan. Members of the delegation, who represent the French Association of Food Industries, are specialized in this field, and will be assisting Jordanian industrialists to launch joint ventures in the food industry. Jordanian industrialists and experts from universities and research centers took part in the workshop entitled 'Food Manufacturing in Jordan', held by the Jordanian University in cooperation with the French Embassy in Amman. The participants delivered lectures on the most up-to-date methods of food packaging and storing. Food industries amount to 13 per cent of Jordan's total industrial products. For his part the French Ambassador said France has the second largest food exports in the world.

Princess Basma tackles development

Manama (Petra)—Her Royal Highness Princess Basma called for an annual Arab report on human development, similar to that of the UN Development Fund (UNDP).

Such a report would serve as an effective tool when taking development-related decisions at the highest level.

An Arab report of this kind would help Arab countries to work out strategies, involving all sectors of the society. The Princess added that coordination amongst Arab countries is not only a strategic option, but a vital element in enhancing human development in Arab countries.

The 1998 UNDP report

brought to light the various types of world consumption, and their impact on human development. The Princess noted that the twentieth century has seen an unprecedented expansion in world consumption, rising sixfold compared to consumption rates in 1950.

The Arab countries have accomplished tangible progress in the area of human development over the past three decades. This has been clearly illustrated by the reduction in child mortality rates, expanding vaccine and inoculation programs, and the reduction in malnutrition among children.



Qwara Ceramics

The fine art of pottery

By Ghassan Joba
Special to The Star

WHEN you enter the showroom of the new Qwara Ceramics factory, you will immediately notice the splendor of the colorful pottery. Even if you are not looking to buy a tea set or some tableware to decorate the house, your hands will not leave the showroom empty.

Both the factory and the showroom were opened on 4 October, and display the new production line of ceramics. The center is part of the Queen Alia Fund (QAF) for Social Development, and was founded in August 1995, with the assistance of USAID in Amman.

The inauguration was made by Yoshio Yabe, the representative of Japan's International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and Wasif Azar, chairman of the QAF Ceramic Department. Officials from the USAID and the Japanese Embassy were also among the audience.

Japan has donated US\$ 200,000 worth of equipment to the center, in order to upgrade the quality and quantity of ceramic productions. The aim is to mass produce ceramics, as well as to improve the manual skills of the artists.

In his opening speech, Mr Azar paid tribute to all the supervisors at the center, showing his appreciation of their unique style of pottery, which for the first time, is being made by talented Jordanian potters.

He praised the idea of the factory as a step towards minimizing the high rates of unemployment in the country. Mr Yabe thanked the QAF for depending on Japanese expert assistance, provided under the scheme of Official Development Assistance (ODA) from the Japanese government.

The donated equipment for the ceramic factory consists of a de-airing extruder fan, an automatic roller machine, an auto-clay cutting machine, and a vacuum agitator and supplements. Ovens and other appliances, were also obtained by grants from the USAID.

Historically, pottery dates back to the middle ages, to the



After combining clay with water, they leave the mixture for a maximum of two weeks to dry. Shaping and decorating the pot doesn't take more than two hours. The clay is cut into a circular shape by an automatic press, and is then moulded by the artist into the desired shape. The moment the pot dries, the artist can decorate using a wide range of beautiful colors, which blend together with the greyish pot.

There are two types of ceramics, earthenware and stoneware. The former is made of slightly porous opaque clay, fired at low heat, whilst the latter is fired at high heat, is well vitrified and is the most common. Qwara ceramics use the finest quality clay; it is durable, and free of impurities and lead. The displayed vessels in the showroom range from tea sets to table-ware, and from ashtrays to flower vases.

The Qwara center operates as the sole producers of customized and commercial ceramic promotional items in Jordan, incorporating Arab and Islamic heritage in most of their artwork. The factory now has a production capacity of about 1500 pieces per day.

Ramzi Abu Ghazaleh, the marketing manager of the QAF, told *The Star* that, "The Qwara showroom has developed human resources, generated quality jobs, and most of all, provided desired products at a competitive price."

The ceramics are now on public display. The Qwara showroom is located in the Muga-Bilein area, opposite to the Crown Hotel, on the JTV road.

Press cocktail

Edited by Ibrahim Odeh

Limiting child birth

Majeed Asfour in *Al Rai* addressed a very important issue in Jordanian society—the high birth rate. If Jordanians go on producing children at their current rate, then the issues of poverty and unemployment will be even harder to eradicate. The increased birth rate could very well turn into a never ending issue. The government social funds will not be able, for instance, to provide for the ever increasing number of beneficiaries.

Asfour says this problem will cost the public budget large sums of money, just like the bread subsidy program. He adds that, in this day and age, a big family is no longer considered healthy. On the contrary, they are seen as a burden, a load on the shoulders of their parents, and an obstacle to public development.

The columnist says we should not be talking about controlling child birth, but we should consider limiting it, to be able to deal with our development problems. Planners and officials should tackle the issue of limiting child birth and unemployment simultaneously, because they are parallel. Advertising on its own will not serve this purpose. We have to teach people that having 12 children—without any concern for potential physical deformity or mental retardation—is an irresponsible act, which will lead to more unemployment and poverty.

Casino Jericho!

In his column in *Shihani*, Fakhri Qawar praises the courage of one Palestinian citizen, who criticized the PNA on live television. The episode happened during "Open Day", a phone-in program hosted by Ahmed Qurai', the speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council.

The caller asked Qurai' about the Casino in Jericho, and wondered if the PNA was thinking next of building a "nudist beach" in Gaza, "which is also against our religion and values." Qurai' and the hosts of the program were flabbergasted at such a question.

The Palestinian official claimed it was not his decision to open the casino, but was up to the PLC. The producers of the program were so angry with this particular caller, that they cut him off and did not give him a chance to reply.

Qawar commends and supports the opinion of the Palestinian caller. Palestine, he says, doesn't need a casino, it needs to regain its independence and dignity.

Qawar drew the readers attention to a very important era in the history of Vietnam, and wonders if the rebels would have conquered a superpower like the USA if they thought about opening up casinos instead of concentrating on their struggle for freedom. The columnist says the Palestinians too should concentrate on their struggle, and should not give in to the attempts of the PNA to "crush any sign of Palestinian resistance."

Al Bustan Palace Inter-Continental (Muscat) wins top magazine award

THE AL BUSTAN Palace Inter-Continental (Muscat) was voted the Best Business Hotel in the World, according to readers of the prestigious UK magazine *Cond Nast Traveller*.

The Al Bustan Palace Inter-Continental (Muscat) was voted number one in a poll of 26,000 readers. The award was collected by the Hotel's regional vice president and general manager, Issa Al Hajry, at a recent ceremony in London.

Cond Nast Traveller said of the Al Bustan Palace Inter-Continental (Muscat) that, "Although it is a business hotel, it doesn't have that 'corporate' feel, because of its exciting location, amazing service and delicious food."

Cond Nast Traveller went on to place the hotel second in its list of 100 'best of the best', with a 96 percent satisfaction score.

The Amstel Inter-Continental (Amsterdam) was ranked sixth in *Cond Nast Traveller's* Best Overseas Business Hotels category. The hotel came 34th on the magazine's top 100 list, with a satisfaction score of 88.7 percent.

The hotels qualified for the awards only when a set number of nominations had been received. The 13 categories for nominations included overseas holiday hotels, UK holiday hotel, overseas business hotels, countries, islands, airlines, cruise lines, overseas cities, UK cities, airport, car rental and spa resorts/hotels.



AMMAN (Star)—It's a new academic year for university students. Earlier this week students at public universities—numbering tens of thousands—flocked to their lecture-halls to start what many say will be an innovative year in the world of academia. Despite talk of increasing fees for credit hours—something that arises every year—the feeling so far is robust. This is especially so for those who are going to university for the first time. At the University of Jordan, for instance, a mood of elation can be detected. This year alone, there are 5,000 new undergraduates on the lists, in addition to the 3,000 students who are registered for higher degrees. All in all, the University has 24,000 students in attendance.



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Lurie's NewsCartoon



Latest addition to the Moscow Mausoleum

Our Say...

Averting a catastrophe

THE SYRIAN-Turkish tension is adding a dangerous dimension to an already hazardous Middle East political scene. Ankara's repeated threats to Damascus of an imminent military action should not be taken lightly by the Arab world.

A military conflict between the two Muslim countries is unpredictable and may easily develop into a regional black hole, not unlike the Gulf Crisis, if it is not contained swiftly.

Turkey's allegations and claims need to be examined closely. The fact that Turkey and Israel have been developing a close military and political alliance in the past few years is enough to point to an illicit Israeli connection to the current conflict. Syria's pivotal role in the now-debunked Middle East peace process is already known. Ankara's dubious relations with the Likud-led government of Benjamin Netanyahu have angered the Arabs and are viewed as hostile and menacing. While Turkey insists that its special closeness to Israel should not worry the Arab world, the timing of this latest crisis calls for a closer examination of the Turkish-Israeli alliance.

There are a number of factors to be considered in the context of the troubled Syrian-Turkish relations. One has to do with historic Syrian claims to territory now under Turkish rule. Another deals with allegations that Syria is offering logistical support to the Kurdish workers Party (PKK) fighters who have been engaged in a struggle against the Ankara government over Kurdish independence. And a third and more important element in the present tension has to do with Turkey's control of water sharing rights of the Euphrates, which crosses into both Syria and Iraq. It would be naive to believe that Israel is an innocent party to the present conflict.

On one hand, Tel Aviv is concerned about Syria's military strength and its special ties with Iran, which supports the Hizbollah fighters in their struggle to liberate Israeli-occupied South Lebanon. Islamic Iran is considered a major threat to Israel and as an unfriendly neighbor to secular Turkey. On the other hand, the Netanyahu government has shut the door before any peaceful settlement to occupied Golan Heights within the context of the ailing Middle East peace process. This mosaic of conflicts and parties makes the Syrian-Turkish crisis a more serious one than it appears.

The Egyptian mediation in the conflict is the most important one at this stage. President Mubarak, who previously criticized the Turkish-Israeli alliance, has rushed to contain the crisis. But if Turkey's hostile stance develops into a military adventure, then Egypt and the other Arab countries must come to Syria's aid. With the bitter memories of the Gulf crisis still fresh in our minds, dialogue and political wisdom must endure to avert a looming catastrophe.

By Star Staff Writer

SECTARIAN wars in the Balkans have become eminent after the break-up of the Yugoslav Federal Union early in 1992.

First, it was the Bosnians who fought for four years to gain (what some prefer to call it) a trilateral state in 1995, to be built on the debris of their heavy human casualties.

Now, ethnic Albanians in Kosovo are having their turn, and it seems that they are heading for a similar fate.

Hundreds have been killed in wide ethnic cleansing massacres—before the eyes of the international community—after the Albanian separatists became determined last February to fight Serbian domination over their territory. Up until now, over 300,000 people have been driven from their homes in Kosovo.

The NATO military forces have been working for months on plans to intervene in Kosovo, and many potential targets have been drawn up to compel the Serb forces to retreat from their province. Yet, as of now, this NATO objective has been conspicuous by its absence.

The Serbians installed an interim government in Kosovo last week, a step they claim was taken "to normalize the situation in the rebellious province."

This declaration was unprecedented. It came in the wake of the UN Security Council discussion of a report made by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan on whether the Serbs are complying with demands to stop their assault in the province.

Western leaders made a final decision on whether to override Russian and Chinese objections, and to start air raids against the Serbian forces. Both Russia and China have flatly rejected using force to end the conflict.

"Military interventions is an illogical move to end such an internal matter," a top Chinese diplomat said.

Russian Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov urged both Britain and the United States not to repeat past mistakes, stressing that problems in Kosovo cannot be solved by using an outside force.

Mr Primakov also reassured the Russian position for opposing any military action without asking the UN first. Last month, the 'Duma' (Russian Parliament) reaffirmed that any unlawful use of force would be considered as aggression.

The Duma said it would review relations with NATO if the West went ahead with its threats of air strikes. Two top Russian officials, Defence Minister Igor Sergeev and Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov, paid a surprise visit to Serbia, a step that may give a warning against any expected military actions.

"There has been a total reluctance in the EU to deal with the Kosovo problem," admits British Prime Minister Tony Blair. British Foreign Minister Robin Cook, moreover, has urged the European Union to step up efforts in order to save time and bring the crisis to an end.

Meanwhile, German Minister Klaus Kinkel said that the clock was at one minute to 12, regarding the expected

The fight for Kosovo

Can Nato move to stop the bloodshed?



US mediator Richard Holbrooke gestures after meeting with Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic in Belgrade October 5. Milosevic told Holbrooke that he threatened NATO air strikes would be a "criminal act", leading a rebuff to hopes of an early end to Yugoslavia's confrontation with the West. The Americans, who had spent most of Monday evening talking to Milosevic said they would go to Pristina later on Tuesday to meet Kosovo Albanian political leaders and then return to Belgrade.

NATO intervention. The Serbs have been given until 15 October, otherwise NATO bombs will begin to fall down on them.

Although he didn't give an

ultimatum, Mr Kinkel stressed that Serbian leaders must be aware of the NATO seriousness. The upcoming few days will be decisive for the whole of Europe.

A view from America

Albright's year and a half term report

By Carrie Nelle

I RECENTLY had a friend stay at my house, and international affairs (politics and diplomacy, not the extra-marital variety) were a regular conversation topic between us. I enjoyed our discussions, because he was one of the most politically astute persons I have ever known, and during one of our debates the name of Secretary of State Madeline Albright was mentioned. Immediately—as a sought of reflex response—I said, "I like her." He then asked me why I liked her.

I have thought about the ensuing conversation many times since then, and I am in a better position to answer.

Albright is a woman for the late 20th century. Her background qualifies her for the exceedingly important position she fills, perhaps more so than any person in recent American politics. She has been Secretary of State for only one and a half years—hardly enough time to judge her work historically.

My friend was particularly concerned that she had done little to move the Arab-Israeli stalemate. She had not participated in the flamboyant shuttle diplomacy like some of her predecessors. Yet, I think her steady, determined efforts are beginning to show positive results. In September, Benjamin Netanyahu and Yasser Arafat shook hands over a new agreement. Unfortunately, but not surprisingly, there has since been violence in the West Bank. I believe that this is the nature of human beings; there will always be some who challenge peace.

In my opinion, Albright is a most capable person at meeting obstacles and defeating them. My friend questioned the 1997 revelation that Albright was born a Jew, and the subsequent enquiry as to whether she tried to cover this fact up. Albright took a lot of flack on this matter. She was even attacked by Jews, who felt she had been denying her heritage and cultural roots. However, upon closer inspection, it has become apparent that it was an honest revelation. If her past achievements are any indication, it will not affect the way she tackles foreign affairs, especially vis-a-vis the Jewish/Palestinian relations.

Albright's family had to flee Czechoslovakia twice, once from the Nazis and

then from the Communists. Her father, a state diplomat and then later a United Nations diplomat, felt he had to take whatever measures necessary to protect his family.

In the 1930s, when Albright was a child, the entire family converted to Roman Catholicism. As the family had not been very religious, it would seem that this was a pragmatic move, rather

Edmund Muskie, and later for Carter appointee Zbigniew Brzezinski. She was the foreign affairs advisor to Geraldine Ferraro, the first woman ever to be named as a candidate for Vice President of the United States by a major party. She later served as the foreign affairs advisor to Michael Dukakis, Democratic Presidential nominee defeated by George Bush.

It was in the 1980s that she met the then Democratic governor of Arkansas, Bill Clinton. Throughout her years in Washington, Albright cultivated the international community and the US politicians. She even managed to win over the reactionary conservative, powerful Jesse Helms, the 'against everything' new since the 1930s Senator from North Carolina.

When Clinton named Albright as Ambassador to the United Nations, she alienated some with her direct stands and overt statements on a number of issues. The very same tactics that would have been appreciated in a man were questioned in a woman. It was not long before she began to be viewed by her colleagues as an individual in a position in which she behaved admirably as opposed to an individual who happened to be a woman.

Since being confirmed as the US Secretary of State in February 1997, Albright has stepped on toes, but some toes need to be stepped upon. She has dedicated herself to her job, with an intellect and energy that would challenge any finite being (Her assistant, James Rubin, has noted that although she is older, he finds it harder to keep up with her grueling physical

schedule). I think my friend's concern as to the accomplishments of Albright is misplaced. She has the background—academically, intellectually and experience-wise—that is needed. All this is tempered with motivation and determination.

Assuming that Clinton will remain in office beyond the present ridiculous scandal, Madeline Albright should bring increased respect to the United States. More importantly, it is hoped that she will be the one who is able finally to bring a substantial measure of stability to the Middle East and Central Europe.



than a religious one.

From her earliest years in the States, Albright was a scholar. She was educated at Wellesley, one of the most outstanding universities in the world. After marrying into a wealthy, influential family (at which time she dropped Catholicism to become an Episcopalian, at the request of the family of her husband), she gave birth to twin daughters, then earned her Ph.D. in political science at Columbia University—again, an excellent learning institution. When Albright and family, including a third daughter by then, moved to Washington, DC, she began her political career in earnest, working first for Senator

Middle East Beat by Khairi Janbek

What to expect?

IT IS difficult to know what to expect anymore from our region—the escalation of tension between neighbors—seem now to be habitual. Alliances emerge overnight, and counter-alliances disappear at the same speed. Any move at reconciliation is immediately seen as hypocritical.

It is crucial that tensions are eased between Syria and Turkey, and the most credible player in the region to provide such mediation has to be Jordan. The Kingdom has a long and respectable record of honesty with Syria, and it also has strong relations with Turkey. Our standing is made for mediation.

The leadership of His Majesty King Hussein provides the ethos for our country's moderation, and peaceful co-existence with our neighbors. In addition, HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, has tirelessly called for the institutionalization of the concept of conflict resolution—in our region, and in the Islamic world as well.

It is vital that this concept is implemented soon, before circumstances become even more intractable. The creation of such a forum would enable all parties to air their views, discuss their fears and priorities, and work together on solving mutual problems.

It is a forum that binds, rather than divides, providing the chance for all to speak freely. Accessibility to information would be easily provided, and the pooling of resources would produce desirable results.

The sooner we can cooperate on this idea, the better. Any end result from a forum is bound to be better than massing troops on borders, and the squandering of the few and valuable resources that we all have to share.

It is ironic that as we all hope and pray that NATO will intervene in Kosovo, to stop the brutality, we see similar tensions building up between Iran and Afghanistan, and Syria and Turkey.

There is also a strong school of thought that expects more trouble for the region in the event of a USA and NATO strike. Venting our frustrations on each other regionally, as well as pan-Islamically, is only likely to increase those frustrations, and lead to violence.

We are not surplus nations. Yet, sadly, what we are doing to each other, by and large, exceeds anything that any extra-regional, or extra-Islamic power can do to us. Rather than search for the shadowy forces behind our own conflicts, let us look deep into ourselves and try to come to terms with each other.

Our common enemies are apparent to all: obscurantism, poverty, under-development, scarcity of resources and investment, are all part of the mosaic that covers the facade of our various nations. They are not enemies that can be defeated through the barrel of the gun, and constant conflict, but rather through cooperation and common understanding.

Will there be a time when these wishes come true? Of course, no one country can provide the answer all by themselves, for we are all bound together by common territory as well as a common religious ethos.

However, for Jordan the path is very clear. It has been affirmed over a period of time, and by our Hashemite leadership. Our ethos is of peace between nations, and the resolution of problems by negotiation, rather than the use of force.

A Union Jack flag flies in front of the Great Hall of the People at the western end of Tiananmen Square (background), as soldiers from the People's Liberation Army, carrying red flags, line up for a welcoming ceremony for British Prime Minister Tony Blair, 6 October. Blair arrived in China for a six-day visit, just hours after Beijing signed a key international convention at the United Nations, guaranteeing political freedoms.



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Business scene

■ Total dealings at Amman Financial Market declined to 46.6 percent last month. Turnover was JD 19.7 million compared with JD 36.9 million in August. Overall traded shares in September were 14.7 million, a fall of 14.7 million compared with August. However, daily dealings stood at JD 0.9 million against JD 1.7 million in August. The lion share of dealings went to the banking and financial institution sectors, which generated JD 9.1 million. This was followed by the industrial sector which generated JD 7.8 million. The services sector produced JD 2.2 million, whilst the insurance sector came last, with JD 0.6 million.

■ The Arab Potash Company will soon get the ISO 9002 certificate for compliance with international standards and specifications—the first company in the region to get such accreditation. It will be the icing on the cake after good performances in the local, regional and global market place.

■ Jordan Petroleum Refinery has finalized its preparations to raise its daily operational capacity to 14,000 tons of crude oil, at a total cost of JD 5 million. This expansion will help the Kingdom to meet its fuel oil requirement up until the year 2003.

■ The Association of Banks in Jordan has issued a new edition of its magazine, *Banks in Jordan*, in which many banking articles were tackled. Among issues published in the magazine is an article on the 22nd session of the Council of the Arab Central Banks Governors and Monetary Establishments held in Amman last month, and the issue of credit facilities offered by the Central Bank of Jordan to all productive sectors. The fiscal results of operating banks in Jordan were also disclosed and analyzed. Added to this, was other banking news items and a detailed report on Amman Financial Market.

■ An Airbus aeroplane model 310 became operational in the Royal Jordanian Airline fleet this week, replacing the old TriStar aircrafts. These planes are for long, medium and short distance flights. The RJ executive director said that the decision comes in line with the government's plan to privatize the airline, and will help the national carrier to curb its debts.

Oktoberfest arrives in Amman

● Hotel Intercontinental (Jordan), and in cooperation with the Royal Jordanian, Opel, Henninger Beer, Aramex, UMS, and Chiquita, will bring the celebration of Oktoberfest directly to Amman once more.

The festival is the most famous annual beer event, and is held over 25 days—from 21 September until 15 October. The celebration commemorates the first production of beer in 1998.

Hotel Intercontinental (Jordan) is holding the German Oktoberfest on 7 and 8 October. The Sepp's Gussman band have flown directly from Munich to provide the authentic German atmosphere. As included in the event are many traditional games and entertainment. Guests will have the chance to enjoy German food, and sample the very popular German beers.

Foreign Exchange Wednesday, 7 October		
	Buy JD	Sell JD
US\$	0.7080	0.7100
£	1.1510	1.1568
DM	0.4124	0.4145
SFR	0.4801	0.4825
FRF	0.1227	0.1233
YEN (100)	0.5624	0.5652
DEL	0.3667	0.3685
LYT (100)	0.0419	0.0421

Amendments to social security law expected soon

By Itham Sadeq
Star Staff Writer

THE REPEATED calls urging decision makers to introduce changes to the pensions and social security laws seems to be having an effect, as there are rumors that amendments are on their way.

The beneficiaries of this law—those who have reached the retirement age—are finding that their social security payments are increasingly being diminished because of rocketing prices in all basic commodities.

This issue is currently being tackled by the social security institutions, who were established to aid employees once they reach the retirement age. In order for these institutions to function properly, they need to forecast well in advance of the current demand, and this can only be done with proper coordination between the Government, the employee and the employer.

To highlight this important issue, *The Star* interviewed Mr. Ali Issa, the executive director at the Social Security Corporation (SSC). He said, "The proposed amendments are intended to close up some current loopholes, discovered during the implementation of the SSC law over the last few years." Mr. Issa went on to add that, "The amendments, due to be submitted to the cabinet soon, will include a number of strategies to prepare the Kingdom for any future changes to the social and economic sectors."

Mr. Issa, who is also the SSC spokesman, outlined some of the proposed amendments to *The Star*. "We hope to ensure that should a worker be killed

at his workplace, then his family next of kin will be entitled to 50 percent of his current wages. This is up until his expected retirement age. In addition, we hope to add more diseases to the list outlined in the current law, to allow more cases to be covered. Should a worker receive a further injury or illness whilst in hospital, we recommend that he/she should be entitled to 75 percent of the current wage (up from the 65 percent entitlement as outlined in the current law). Should the worker have to be readmitted to hospital within six months after treatment, then the same provisions should also apply as well," Mr. Issa explained.

The Social Security laws aim to provide cover for those who reach the age of retirement, die, or become disabled. For the first time, however, it is proposed that the widower and any dependents (over 18 years old) should receive a share of the expected pension.

This is not all. The draft amendments will also address the possibility of raising the pension payments, in order to cope with the rising cost of living, and to improve the purchasing power of Jordanians. Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh has recently promised to address this problem.

Referring to the issue of



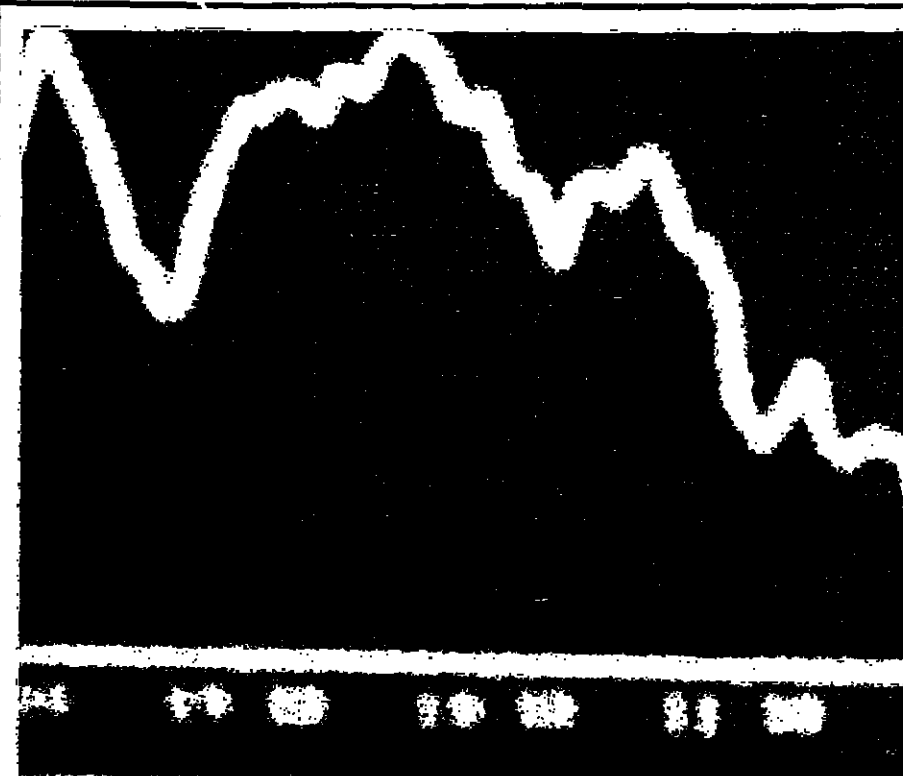
Mr. Issa

early retirement, Mr. Issa explained that, "The present guidelines will remain the same; namely at the age of 45 for both male and female workers, with 15 years service as a minimum requirement." However, should parliament endorse the early retirement proposals, then the SSC could be obliged to pay vast amounts to pensioners. Asked whether the corporation would be able to meet these obligations, Mr. Issa pointed out that, "The SSC produces a financial status report every five years, to be acquainted with its expenditure and revenues. The plan enables us to recognize current needs and to prepare for expected problems in the future. It should be mentioned that the our expenditures increase every

year, but the corporation is capable of meeting its commitments in the short run."

Mr. Issa, who has been with the SSC since its establishment in 1979, added that, "The SSC intends to increase revenues, in order to face any future deficits." The revenues themselves come from monthly subscription fees collected from subscribers, and from the interest accrued from investments (The SSC invests over JD 1 billion in various economic sectors, including public share holding companies, loans, treasury bonds, real estate, banking and tourism. Last year, these investments generated about JD 80 million).

If anyone can prepare the Kingdom its future pension responsibilities, then it is Mr. Issa—the author of two books on the subject of social security. The first, published in 1989, is a comparative study between the social security laws in Jordan and 10 other Arab states, whilst the other, published in 1996 is entitled "Towards an Arab strategy on social security." Chapters from the latter have been published in *Ad Dustour* newspaper, and his proposed strategy will be the center of discussion at the 9th Arab Seminar expected to convene in Morocco on 20 October. If approved, the strategy will be presented to the Conference of Arab Ministers, as a blueprint for an Arab strategy on social security.



A share trader touches his head while standing in front of the German DAX index board during a trading session at the Frankfurt stock exchange, 7 October. Germany's blue chip index rose on Wednesday in what traders said was "a technical recovery," that may boost the benchmark another four percent before it wanes. Reuters

A crisis of ideas is the real trouble with Russia

By John Thornhill

ANY READER of Dostoevsky's novel *The Brothers Karamazov* will know all about sibling rivalry. Rarely, though, has a family debate been conducted on as elevated a level as that between the two brothers Chubais.

As a senior minister during much of President Boris Yeltsin's administration, Anatoly, the younger and better known of the brothers, has been the chief motor behind Russia's drive towards a market economy and an eloquent advocate of economic liberalism.

Yet Igor Chubais, a distinguished philosopher and sociologist eight years older than Anatoly, has been one of the sharpest critics of Mr Yeltsin's regime. He has frequently condemned the debasement of democracy, the Chechen war, and the mass privatisation programme conducted by his brother.

"What is reform?" asks Igor. "It is practically a synonym for a terrible Russian word, anarchy."

While Anatoly has long argued that only the growth of an effective market economy can lay the basis for a prosperous and democratic society in Russia, Igor believes the reverse is true. Confined to the margins of public debate for the past few years, Igor's views have assumed a greater resonance as Russia tries to comprehend the reasons for its latest financial crash and the apparent failure of reforms.

"The most painful crisis facing society is economic but the most profound, overwhelming all others, is the crisis of ideas," Igor wrote in a recent polemical tract, *Russia in Search of Itself*. "Until Russia has solved the problem of how it looks on the world it cannot solve any other problem."

Sitting in his book-lined study in a half-built suburb in north Moscow, the bearded, bespectacled Igor argues that Russia desperately needs to rediscover a system of values to underpin a new social and political order and provide consensus for real reform. It is symptomatic of the country's confused state, he says, that Russia still has not developed a concept of national security nor approved any words for its post-communist national anthem.

"We understand that we are no longer the Soviet Union. We understand that

we are not the Russian empire. We understand that we are not western Europe. But then who are we? Until we have developed a new identity we cannot conduct serious, reasonable, logical, consistent policies."

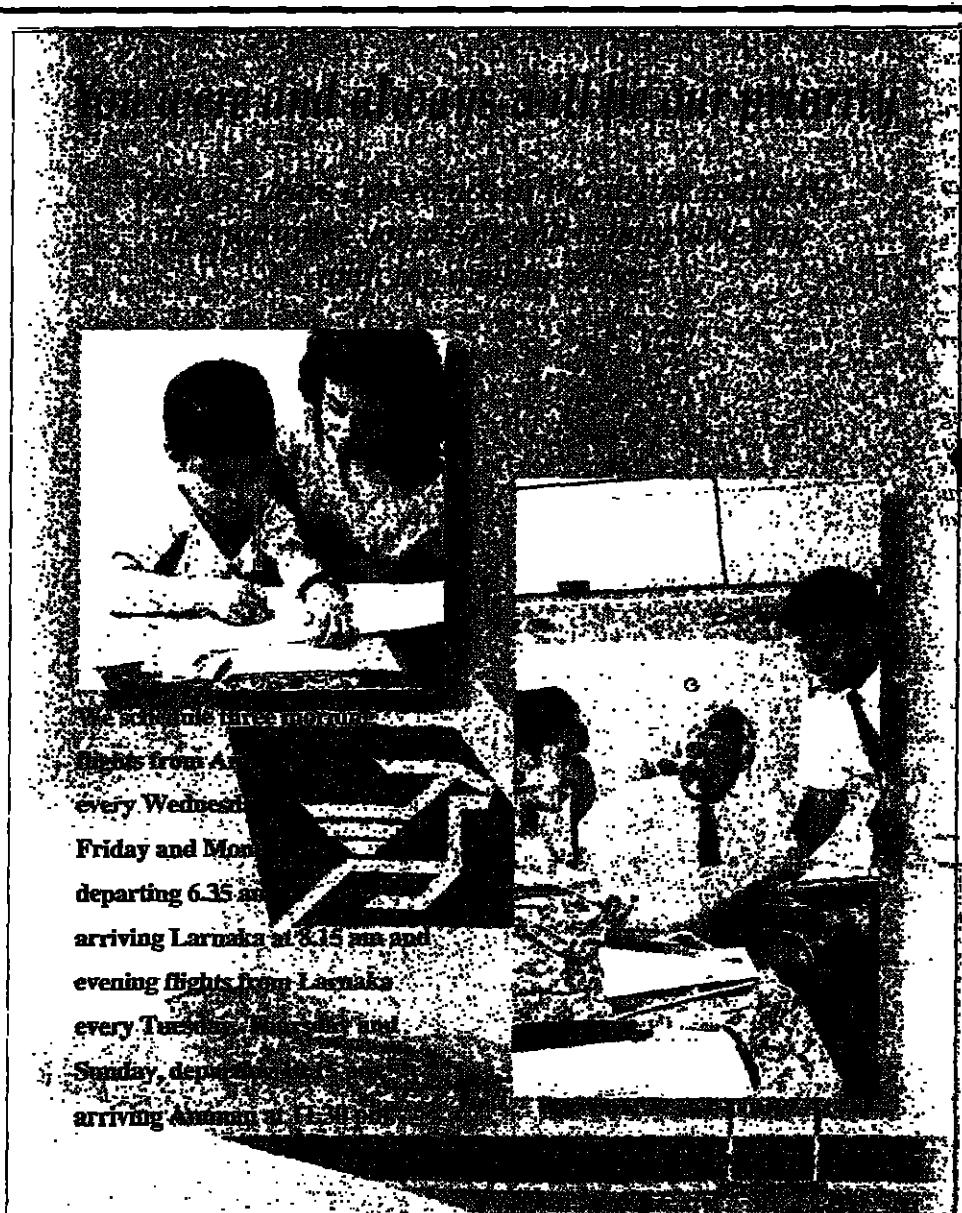
Igor is personally trying to restart the wide-ranging debate about Russia's national identity that was begun nearly a century ago and truncated by the Bolshevik revolution of 1917. Before the revolution, a group of Russian philoso-

phers tried to steer the discussion by publishing a series of essays, called *Vekhi* (Signposts).

As editor of a series of pamphlets called *Novye Vekhi* (New Signposts), Igor is trying to build on that earlier work and help Russia discover a new moral compass for itself. One of the most important tasks he identifies is for Russians to understand more about their own tragic history, distorted by Soviet propaganda and still the subject of bitter

political wrangles. Igor believes Russia should learn from the experience of 1947-48 to purge itself of Nazism. "Without a common acceptance and understanding of what happened in the past it is impossible to agree on a route map for the future," he says.

Igor suggests Russia should set up a national institute to study the country's history and culture and develop school courses to educate the young.



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A dealer smiles as she takes a break in between heavy dollar trading in Taipei, 7 October. Taiwan foreign exchange markets saw a volume of \$963.5 million on Wednesday, the highest trading volume alone this year. The Taiwan dollar closed at T\$33.346 to the US dollar. Reuters

Struggling to rebuild an Afghan village

By Pamela Constable

PURAG, Afghanistan—A generation ago, this tiny village two hours drive south of Kabul was so renowned for its pastoral tranquillity that Afghan kings would retreat here on weekends to hunt quail and partridge and take tea with local elders in a riverside glade.

But by 1990, when Mohammad Iqbal fled Purag and immigrated to the United States, the village of yore was no longer recognizable. Bombs and rockets had destroyed many of the fields and houses. Some of Iqbal's friends had been killed in years of fighting against Soviet occupiers and later among rival Afghan militias. Others, like his first cousin, Agha Zared, had moved their families to refugee camps in neighboring Pakistan.

Two weeks ago Iqbal—now 28 and a US citizen living in Manhattan—came home again. What he found was a community struggling to rebuild with primitive tools and determined pride, friends and neighbors trying to rekindle traditional bonds after years as exiled nomads, and families trying to survive in an environment of post-war poverty and isolation that has cut them off from basic education and health care.

Iqbal, with his American acquired habits, became an object of curiosity and teasing. "People see me going down to the river after meals to brush my teeth, and they ask me why," said the car mechanic and hospital worker as he strolled around the village. "I brought back dental floss, and they think that is even funnier." In some ways, Purag today looks much as it once did: a maze of neat, two-story mud-walled houses, perhaps 100 in all, surrounded by a steep mud wall. Around it on three sides grow corn, potatoes, onions and other crops, divided by small irrigation ditches leading to a rushing stream.



A woman leads a camel caravan along a stretch of the Kabul-Kandahar highway, where the extent of Afghanistan's poverty and despair is most noticeable.

But after two decades of death, destruction and displacement, the families of Purag—like those in dozens of once-abandoned Afghan villages—face countless difficulties as they try to revive their way of life. The task is further complicated by the single-minded religious agenda of the Taliban movement, which since seizing control of Afghanistan has focused far more energy on ensuring strict conformity to its harsh form of Islamic rule than on meeting basic needs of the populace.

There is a school in a nearby town, but most families in Purag cannot spare their sons from field work, and their daughters are banned by the Taliban from attending class at all. Instead, many village children spend their days digging potatoes by hand.

There is a health clinic but no trained staff, no one to attend births and no hospital

closer than Kabul, the capital. Under the Taliban's severe restrictions on women's activities, women are allowed to travel only if accompanied by a male relative, and a journey to Kabul is slow and expensive. As a result, village leaders said, the gravest health problem they face is mothers and babies dying in childbirth.

"We try to carry the pregnant women to Kabul, but by the time they get there, sometimes they or the baby are dead," said Zared, 27.

Most village families have returned from Pakistan since the Taliban seized Kabul two years ago, hoping to reclaim their ancestral farmland. But there are no tractors or modern farm implements, no seeds or fertilizer. A few people have bought cows, but they constantly worry about animal diseases, and there is no access to veterinary care.

"A good cow costs a fortune,

at least 10 million afghanis," the equivalent of \$300, said Zared. "Everyone is happy to be back, but we have so many problems. People are poor and sick, and they have nowhere to go."

Like hundreds of thousands of Afghan men, Zared and Iqbal spent their adolescence fighting, often side by side, in local militias against the Soviet troops who occupied Afghanistan for 10 years. But the cousins' fates diverged a decade ago. Iqbal, with a serious bullet wound in the head, was evacuated to the United States for medical treatment and settled there. Zared and his family fled across the Pakistani border to Peshawar, where they lived in refugee camps.

Today, Zared is a penniless, semi-literate farmer with few prospects, sunken cheeks and sad eyes. Iqbal speaks English, wears a comfortable paunch and can return to the West

whenever he chooses. "I'm not sure how long I could take it here now," Iqbal confided as he watched an old man plow a field behind two oxen, leaning his full weight on the crude wooden blade.

Still, it is evident that Zared and other Purag returnees have used their meager resources to maximum collective advantage. By hand, they have redived the intricate system of irrigation ditches; as a result, the fields are bursting with vegetables for the table and fodder for the draft animals. There is even a small stand of apple trees full of ripe red fruit.

And even though the village economy is still operating at a subsistence level, there is palpable pride among residents at what they have accomplished. Even those who left more comfortable lives in Pakistan, drawn purely by homesickness, said they do not regret the decision.

"It is best to be in one's own land, even if there are no opportunities," said Ghulam Nabi, 39, one of Iqbal's uncles. In Peshawar, he had a good job making prostheses in a foreign-funded hospital for war victims. Now, he said, "I am just a farmer. Doctors are farmers, engineers are farmers, everyone is a farmer. But we are home."

Even the local tourist attraction has changed since the war. Once it was the garden where King Zahir Shah used to sit and chat with village leaders during more peaceful, prosperous times. Now it is the spot at the far edge of a cornfield where a pristine, baby-blue Russian bomb has lain since the mid-1980s.

The children know they are not supposed to go near the object, but they can't help poking and prodding. One day, the people of Purag know, it may explode.

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

Wherever I lay my hat, that's my home

By Judy Dempsey

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM—It's still only a trickle, but Russian Jews are again anxiously making inquiries about immigration to Israel. In the early 1990s, close to 150,000 a year quit the former Soviet Union to head south to an unfamiliar homeland. The numbers have since tapered off to fewer than 50,000 a year.

The Jewish Agency, responsible for handling immigration to Israel, wants to reverse this slide as part of its Zionist drive to settle as many Jews as possible in Israel. Russia's unfolding economic crisis might help its cause, but so far Jews are not rushing to leave.

Those who do decide to settle in Israel today will do so more for economic reasons than out of Zionist or religious conviction—just like the majority of the 750,000 Russian Jews who have moved there since 1990. That exodus was the largest single wave of immigration to Israel since the 1950s, when nearly half a million Sephardic Jews from Morocco and other Middle Eastern countries were hastily settled in remote parts of the country.

So what has become of these 1990s Russians, the "new immigrants"? Are they Israeli, Russian or even Jewish? What sort of society have they moved into?

Unlike the Sephardim, the Russians quickly established their own political party, Yisrael Ba'Aliya, led by Natan Sharansky, a former Soviet dissident who has taken a tough stance on negotiations with the Palestinians. It won seven seats in the 1996 general election and has two cabinet posts in Benjamin Netanyahu's right-wing government.

Economically, the Russians' arrival in Israel has created a consumer boom and reservoir of skills. Each is given a state handout of \$12,000 (£3,500), which they spend like the East Germans did immediately after German unification, buying cars and fridges, televisions and travelling abroad.

Today, more than 80 per cent own their homes, and they have

quickly entered the professional classes: unlike the first and second generation of Sephardim, most of the Russians are well educated—engineers, scientists and artists.

They are also highly motivated, unwilling to be bullied or marginalized, unlike the Sephardim, who for years were looked down on by the European Ashkenazi Jews who dominated the power elites.

And if Russians couldn't find a job in their field, many started from the bottom, washing dishes, cleaning homes, retraining, or, like Irena Tarasiuk, reviving a derelict kibbutz.

"I had little choice," says Tarasiuk, 36. She emigrated from Volgograd to Israel eight years ago, lived in Haifa for a while but found no work as an engineer. "The kibbutz was completely empty," she recalls, sitting in her sparsely furnished office.

Kibbutz Pelech, situated on top of a hill, south of the Lebanese border and close to Carmel, a bustling town now dominated by Russians, seems an unlikely place for a new immigrant. The temporary cabins, built in 1981 when the kibbutz was founded, have become permanent fixtures, vacant, paint. The paths need repaving. The small gardens need tending.

But Tarasiuk is realistic about her new life, managing a kibbutz that, against the trend, is still a co-operative. "We each get about NIS 3,000 a month. But I might introduce income differentials," she says.

Some nine families live in the kibbutz, all eating in the communal dining room. All Russian-speaking, they come from Baku, Ukraine, Volgograd. Religion and Zionism mean little. A third are not Jewish. Some speak Hebrew haltingly. But then, many of the locals speak Russian.

Under a sudden heavy rain shower, we go down a stony lane to the cow sheds. There, 230 large Friesian cows await the afternoon milking session. "We are beginning to break even," says Tarasiuk, adding that the kibbutz had to get bank loans when she took over as manager. Production of milk, chickens and kiwi fruit repay the debt. Inside the milking parlour, two men, a Druze and a Bedouin, are cleaning the milking machines. "We all get on," says Tarasiuk, who yearns for peace with the Palestinians. "We have to find compromises with our neighbours. You have to look at it from both sides."

In the last election, Tarasiuk voted for Shimon Peres, former Labour party leader. In the next election, she's not sure. As for Sharansky, she said he never bothers replying to her letters.

Tarasiuk never imagined she would have to think about the peace process. "To tell you the truth, I never even thought I would be living in Israel. But I'm very happy here. When I look at what's happening in Russia today, I feel very sad. I am a Russian. Over there, there is no security for tomorrow. Inside me, I have security. It's an important feeling."

As we go back up to the kibbutz houses, I notice two large satellite dishes. "Oh those," says Tarasiuk. "They point in the direction of Russia so that we can see Russian television."

Edward Kuznetsov is one of those Russians who believes the days when Israel could be described as a melting pot are over. The former Soviet dissident, now edi-

tor of Vesty, the largest and most influential of Israel's Russian-language newspapers, believes there is a revival of identity and culture among different ethnic groups.

The trend is already noticeable, with different political movements representing different ethnic minorities. The Russians and the ultra-Orthodox Sephardic Shas party are the two most prominent. But he says that, since the great influx of Russians in the early 1990s, tensions between them and Sabra (those born in Israel) are increasing. He also says it is the Sephardim who "resent us" most.

"When we arrived, the Sephardim were involved in local councils. Fights started. The Russians wanted a piece of the cake, too. You see, the Sephardim think the Russians are a threat to their power."

Not surprisingly, after struggling for years to climb the economic, social and political ladder, many Sephardim hold the same view about the Russians.

Kuznetsov, like other Russians, thinks the Sephardim are lazy and lack discipline. It is a view that exposes one of the fault-lines in Israeli society: it is widely held that, because the Sephardim are from the Middle East and north Africa, their standards and culture are inferior to the Russians' and those of the Ashkenazim. This, according to Kuznetsov, is where the Russians can benefit Israeli society.

"We can Europeanise Israel. With our culture and traditions, we can give it a more European face. The main problem with Israel is that it is too Levantine."

"We can Europeanise Israel. With our culture and traditions, we can give it a more European face. The main problem with Israel is that it is too Levantine."

The European face. The main problem with Israel is that it is too Levantine.

Kuznetsov has just as little sympathy for the ultra-Orthodox Shas party, which is in Netanyahu's coalition government. He says one of the biggest threats to Israel is "the growing power and influence of the religious parties." But much of his wrath, often reflected in Vesty, is preserved for those "typical liberals" who believe peace with the Arabs is possible.

The Russians, he says, do not trust the Arabs. "And the Arabs cannot be trusted because they are not democratic. We might be ready to give up land if our neighbours can be trusted. But if there has to be land for peace, why don't they give us some land?"

For a person who once depended on human rights activists to free him from a Soviet jail and get him to Israel, Kuznetsov seems reluctant to question how Israel fails to safeguard human rights for Palestinians living under its control. House demolitions and land confiscations do not interest him. And when I dared question his view about Palestinian Authority president Yasser Arafat, he asked me to leave his office.

Sharansky's tough stand on the peace process is still supported by many Russians. Yet the former human rights dissident rarely, if at all, speaks out for the rights of Palestinians or Israeli Arabs. Many Yisrael Ba'Aliya party supporters don't seem bothered about these aspects of civil society, probably inured by decades of totalitarianism to fend only for themselves. But if anything concerns them, it is land.

"The Soviet Union was huge," explains Maya Sluski, a party activist living in Ashdod, a city which has undergone a transformation since the early 1990s.

Once a sea-coast city dominated by Moroccans who worked at the nearby port, Russians now make up nearly 40 per cent of the population. They live in modern eight-storey housing, and in a new section of the city where Hebrew is hardly heard on the streets, where shop signs are in Russian and where many watch Russian television.

"Israel is tiny. Every inch of land is important," says Sluski, who adds that she does not trust the opposition Labour party, not only because of its views on the peace process, but because it is a "bit socialist." "It's a kind of reaction, I suppose. That is why we support Sharansky. He's tough with the Palestinians and supports the market economy," said Sluski.

However, little has been done to assist non-Jews in converting to Judaism. The Absorption (Immigration) Ministry, headed by Yuli Edelstein of the Yisrael Ba'Aliya party, reckons as many as 50 per cent of all Russians might not be Jewish as defined by the halacha, or Jewish law, meaning that their mothers were not Jewish.

Some want to convert to Judaism but are not willing to accept the rigours of the Orthodox rabbinate, the powerful religious institution which, through its monopoly on the registration of births, marriages, burials and conversions, decides who is Jewish. Those converted in Israel by the Reform or Conservative rabbis, who represent the liberal strands of Judaism, are simply not recognised as Jews by the Orthodox rabbinate.

So a young Russian in the Israeli army killed in action cannot be buried in a Jewish cemetery if he was converted to Judaism by a non-Orthodox rabbi in Israel, even if one of his grandparents was Jewish.

But the fight to define the character is only just beginning. As Israeli society fragments, so too an ethnic line-up is emerging—with secular Russians on one side and Shas on the other. Each is struggling to define their own and the country's identity, each struggling to shape Israel's future. Such is the struggle facing new immigrants as they weigh up the costs of a new beginning.

Financial Times Syndication

Gadhafi lambastes Arab allies' stance over Lockerbie case

By John Daniszewski

CAIRO, Egypt—Libyan leader Col. Muammar Gadhafi is rarely dull, whether creating the "Great Man-Made River" to bring water across 1,000 miles of desert, or offering to procure a lawyer for President Clinton in the Monica Lewinsky scandal. But even given his predilection for the bizarre, the dictator, who is beginning his 30th year in power, caught many of the world's Arabs by surprise last month by proclaiming that he had given up on them.

"The Arab world is finished," declared Gadhafi, peeved at what he perceived as lukewarm solidarity among fellow Arabs for his campaign to escape UN sanctions imposed on Libya because of the bombing of a jetliner over Scotland. "I have no more time to waste talking with Arabs," he said. "I now talk about Pan-Africanism and African unity."

It was a dramatic turnaround for a strongman who has made Arab unity his political touchstone since the 1960s. And Gadhafi did more than talk. After his comments, Libya's government eliminated its Ministry for Arab Unity. State television removed the map of the Arab world that has been its backdrop since 1969, replacing it with a map of the African continent.

"I would like Libya to become a black country. Hence, I recommend to Libyan men to marry only black women and to Libyan women to marry black men," Gadhafi said in a televised interview.

Such actions and comments might be dismissed as pique, but they reflect serious pressures now bearing down on Gadhafi, who must decide whether to hand over for trial the two Libyan suspects in the 1988 bombing of PanAm Flight 103.

The United States and Britain agreed 24 August to Gadhafi's long-term proposal that the suspects in the bombing, which killed 270 people, including 189 Americans, be tried in the Netherlands before Scottish judges and under Scottish law.

Previously, they had insisted that the suspects be tried in the United States

or Britain, and some relatives of the victims criticized the shift as coddling. The United States and Britain said their offer was non-negotiable.

If Gadhafi does not turn over the suspects, the UN Security Council warned, Libya could face a toughening of sanctions that already include a UN-imposed ban on international air travel and arms sales and a freeze on some Libyan assets abroad. New sanctions could include a ban on the oil sales that help keep the North African country's economy afloat.

Nevertheless, more than one month later, it remains uncertain whether Gadhafi will comply. He has raised a series of questions about the trial, including how appeals would be handled, where the suspects would be imprisoned if convicted and how their rights would be protected.

Diplomatic sources here believe that Gadhafi wants the trial of Abdel Basset Ali Megrahi and Lamen Khalifa Fhimah to go forward—but under the Libyan leader's terms.

In particular, he would like to ensure that, once in custody, the two men will not be used by prosecutors to build a case against Libya itself, which some in the West believe had a hand in the bombing.

Gadhafi wants to make sure that the men won't be transferred to Britain or the United States if convicted—a demand that Libya's UN ambassador, Abuzed Omar Dorda, underlined before the General Assembly this week—and wants the trial to stay focused on their alleged individual actions.

In spite of Gadhafi's irritation with Arabs, the 22-member Arab League is trying to act as intermediary to address Gadhafi's concerns.

Its secretary-general, Ahmad Esmat Abdel Meguid, has been in contact with British and US officials.

Scotland has appointed prosecutors, and a trial site has been designated on a Dutch air base. But it is anyone's guess whether the Libyan suspects will have their day in court. "I think he (Gadhafi) is going to try to weasel out of it one way or another," said a Western official.

In the meantime, Gadhafi became



Muammar Gadhafi

annoyed last month when Arab foreign ministers meeting here would not defy the UN flight ban on Libya, as various African leaders have done since June. Gadhafi's switch to Pan-Africanism, however, has tended only to alienate his old friends.

Gadhafi is wrong to ignore all that Arabs have done to support him, wrote Talman Salman, publisher of Beirut's As Safir newspaper. Gadhafi's fleeing from the Arab world, Salman wrote, "does neither the Arabs nor Libya any good."

Star Online
http://star.arabia.com

First lady of north London

She is won two Oscars for writing and for acting, yet genuinely prefers a low-key life. But now reluctant star Emma Thompson is taking up her pen again, she tells SIMON FANSHAW

EMMA THOMPSON opens her door, extends her arms and with her complicated smile greets me soothingly: "Fanshawe..." Only in England can a surname be a sign of real warmth. Her formality offers intimacy. It's what she does so well on screen, what made her portrayal of romance so perfect in *Sense and Sensibility*. Her restraint as Jane Austen's heroine, Elinor Dashwood, suggested engagement rather than coolness. The height of her reserve was the strength of her passion. Her detachment spoke more eloquently than any emotional outpouring of the sheer depth of her love. Not for me, you understand, but for Huge Grant's Edward Ferrars.

It's a while since we have seen each other and an even longer time since we first met doing shows back-to-back on the Edinburgh Fringe, almost 16 years ago to the day, in between her Footlights success and her now in famously panned TV comedy series. But Thompson is a girl who returns phone calls. She discards nobody from the heights of her fame, mainly because she really doesn't believe in the trappings of her career. There may be two Oscars in the downstairs loo, making her the only person to have won for both writing—*Sense and Sensibility*—and performing—*Howards End*—but, a little surprised, she rejects any suggestion that she might now be a "player" in Hollywood, or even want to be one. "It's easy to abdicate from all that. You just say no to things. If I wanted to deal with a company and a four-picture deal with a studio. But I don't. I don't want to be a player. I just want to write scripts and do a bit of acting." Later she says: "I shall probably never move from this house."

She lives in the same street where she was born in north London. Also in the road live her mother—the actress Phyllida Law—and the third these in the family, her sister Sophie, with both of whom she was bound into eternal comradeship by the premature death of her father Eric in her early twenties. A new addition to the troupe is the actor Greg Wise. Wise is decidedly a bit of crumpet, over whom few women would readily step to get their bedroom slippers. "Everybody fancies Greg," she says, looking a little triumphant but also (what I take to be) slightly weary about it being pointed out. Yet it is shyness, not weariness, in her voice and, more than that, in her eyes you can see an unbearable anticipation that she is going to be asked to talk about her "private life," which she explicitly says she doesn't want to do. For all her exuberance and vivacity, she finds in genuinely uncomfortable to talk about herself rather than her work. What she does want to talk about is Chile, the screenplay she is writing about its most famous folk

singer, Victor Jara, who was murdered by the Pinochet regime, and the concert in London on September 6 to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the right-wing military coup that toppled President Allende in 1973.

It is this kind of thing that gets her into trouble with the hacks. In Britain, she's an actress, so they require her to be gushing, insincere and self-promoting like the rest. But she will insist on remaining independent of their view of her. She will continue to express her political opinions, no matter how foolish they then try to make her look. Despite the fact that she really does care about such things, the papers will continue to screech "luvvie" the minute she mentions Chile or the Gulf war. If she cries—it is, after all, her job as an actress to feel and then filter emotions—they refuse to believe her sincerity.

When she married Ken Brannagh, the press was utterly determined that their life would be a constant fur-lined Jacuzzi of celebrity, despite the more mundane truth that they fell in love and just liked working together. So the press invented "Ken and Em." Vivien Leigh and Laurence Olivier, the His and Hers of Tinseltown, Mr and Mrs Star Turn. And in the end, did their marriage fall apart partly because they were being pushed into something they weren't? Yes, inevitably that was part of it. There is a long pause. "That's what they wanted us to be," and then she tries to steer the conversation back to work.

The point about Thompson and her fame is that everyone, except those who actually know her, apparently refuses to accept that she really could be who she seems to be: a fairly conventional London girl with a great family and a bucketload of talent, who has no car



and often uses the Tube. "I just wouldn't like to lose my anonymity, which makes it very easy to turn down a big movie," she says. "The way to

guard your independence is to be quite strict about what you choose to do. And not to need the money, or want the money." But how can this be? This

is the movie star equivalent of not playing the lottery, not indulging in the habit of perpetual greed and dissatisfaction with life fomented every day by the tabloids. When the media spends all its energy dangling the glories of fame, celebrity and double-page sunned leatherette spreads in *Hellol* and *OK!* in front of us, who the hell does an Oscar-winning actress who could have it all, but just won't collude, think she is?

She's not daft about all this. "I know what I appear to be saying is I'm an ordinary person. And people get resentful about that because it would be disingenuous not to recognize that I can go to places where I get paid an awful lot of attention. But I just don't want to live like that. I couldn't bear to live behind walls with bodyguards. I don't want to be rude about America, but LA is lovely as long as you know you can leave." And she, says later, "anyway, if you live in the same place as you grew up like I do, you can't start putting on airs and graces, people just won't stand for it."

All this makes her an emancipated woman in a rather old-fashioned kind of way. "I think the thing that my mother and sister and I are probably most proud of is that we have always earned our own living, which is the most important thing for any women." As Jane Austen says through Elinor to Edward, "You will inherit your fortune, we cannot even earn ours." This self-reliance is what gave Thompson the confidence to write.

The story tells a love affair between an English dancer who went to Chile and one of the country's great folk heroes. There's a romance that lasted for 15 years and was only ended by the barbarity of a regime that, apparently offended by poetry and music, tortured

and then killed Jara. "I want to tell not a slushy romance, but a story about the reality of love rather than its infantile state. It's about two people from different backgrounds, classes if you want to use that word, and cultured who lived in the Chile of the 1960's, a place of extraordinary genius and creativity."

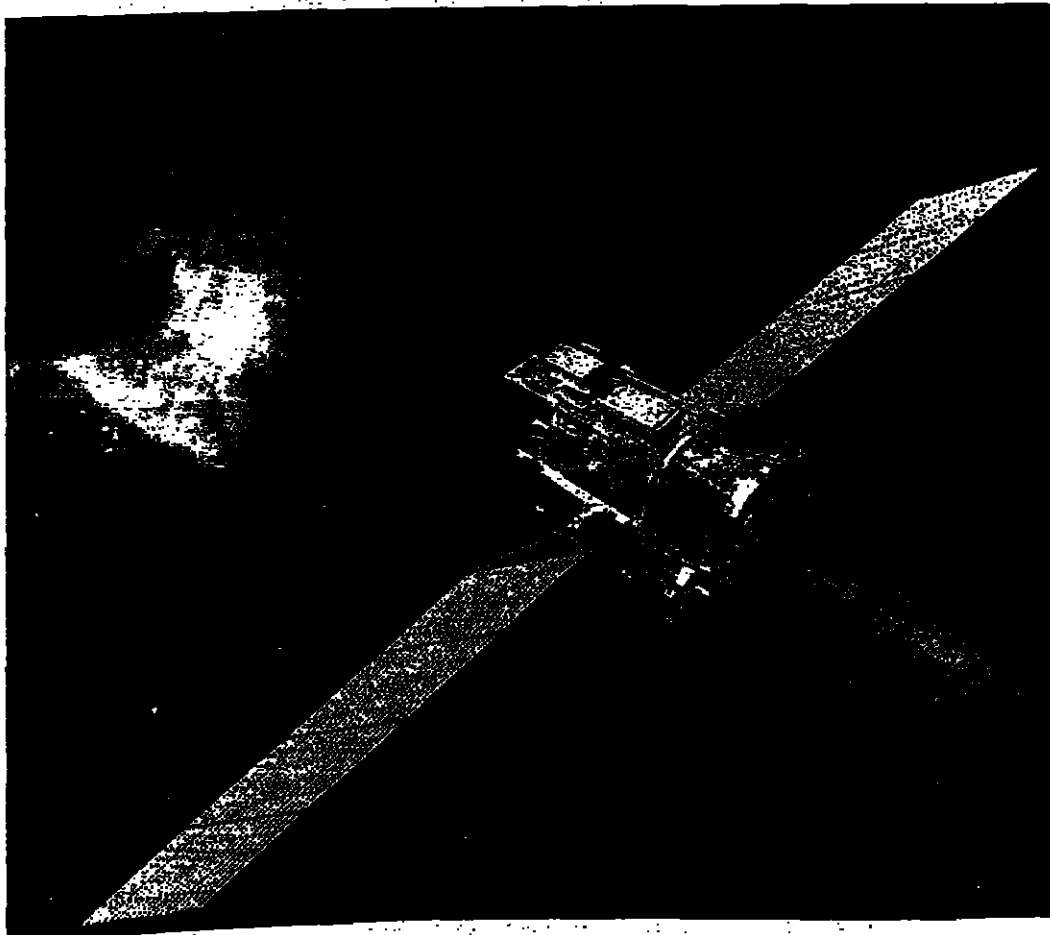
She wants the film to reflect the fact that the suffering people experienced in Chile is not foreign, somehow "others," but that "it could happen here," perhaps not literally but "in a way that makes people realize we can't separate ourselves from it. And I'd love to write a film that started in English and ended in Chilean, without people really noticing the subtitles. I'd like to do it without the audience thinking they were watching a foreign language film." Which is strange because that's one of the few Oscars she hasn't won yet. "I'm going for make-up next time."

Of course, it may be uncommiserated at the moment but there are producers waiting in the wings. It's not blockbuster material, but you have to have more confidence than Thompson herself, who says without anxiety, "I'm not box office in America. I'm just a popular Brit." She may be right, however. Primary Colors, her latest movie in which she co-stars with John Travolta for a rumored \$2m (£1.2m) fee, enabled her to choose to take time off for a year to write: it has not been a money-spinner in America.

Thompson is very good in Primary Colors. She produces an uncanny authentic American accent and she slaps Travolta with such satisfying ferocity at one point that you feel she's administering the belt that everyone wants to give Clinton for jeopardizing his presidency by failing to control his zipper. The palm of her hand packs a moral punch. The steadfast Susan Stanton has much of Thompson's backbone and straightforwardness. When the movie comes out in Britain in October, Thompson will still be immersed in writing her Chilean love story. The premiere will probably benefit the young homeless charity Alone in London, of which she is patron. Acting, writing and demonstrating an almost Victorian sense of social responsibility all at the same time, she is a woman of whom her heroine, Jane Austen, would have heartily approved. "When you're older, you just stop whining about how you're perceived. There's always going to be somebody who thinks you're a prill. But I don't believe any of it. It's just being free and independent."



A man stands under an umbrella to protect himself from snow, as he sells fish on a roadway near the village of Iasen, some 100 km south-east of Minsk. Heavy snowfall hit some Belarussian regions on Monday, seriously worsening the traffic situation.



An artist's conception of NASA's Deep Space One (DS1) spacecraft, scheduled to be launched on 15 October, 1998, is shown in this photograph released by NASA's Jet Propulsion Lab. The spacecraft will attempt to encounter asteroid 1992 KD in July 1999, with the primary mission concluding in September 1999. If the spacecraft is healthy and NASA continues the mission, the spacecraft may be on a path that would allow an encounter with comet Wilson-Harrington and comet Borrelly in 2001. DS1 is the first scheduled mission in the NASA New Millennium program.

Reuters

Spitting Distance

Watching the Clinton video and other train wrecks

By Susan Campbell

TO UNDERSTAND the fascination some feel about the Washington sex scandal, one need only turn the pages of history. In July 1861, the Union Army marched from Washington to Manassas, Virginia, to fight the Confederate Army. The battle would be the first important engagement of the Civil War.

Civilian Washingtonians, eager for a lark, packed lunch baskets and piled into carriages to travel 25 miles to the battlefield. Fighting raged for five hours, and the Union Army—and its attendant audience—was sent back to Washington with the unhappy news that the Civil War would be anything but a lark.

Even further back, in revolutionary-era France, members of the nobility were marched to public squares and beheaded among crowds ringing the guillotines. Those audiences, too, brought food. Unlike the Washingtonians, who were shocked by the bloodshed they saw, the revolutionaries often sang raucous songs, drank and dined as the heads rolled.

President Clinton spent just more than four hours on the gridle, answering intimate and detailed questions about his sexual proclivities, and when the videotape was broadcast in its entirety, Americans tuned in.

So why is this stuff being publicly consumed, anyway? It's the draw of the weird, the herd mentality that makes some of us—even if we like the guy—ring the wounded. It's why we slow down to look at car wrecks. It's why we watch soap operas, buy videos like "The World of Extreme Justice" and indulge in gossip.

People may decry the activities. Some say the president's testimony was too graphic for public consumption, but that kind of complaint, too, goes way back—all the way to Cicero, who complained that all the news coming out of Rome was bad, said Bill McLaughlin, associate professor of communications at Quinnipiac College and former CBS News reporter.

Yet, the need to rubberneck didn't start—or end—with Cicero. "Is it Schadenfreude? That German word?" McLaughlin said. The word means a general glee at someone else's misfortune. "Or is it like the first line of 'Finnegan's

Wake,' where a woman is standing at the lace curtain, and feels sad watching a hearse go by but is glad that it's not her inside."

"It's part of the reason we read obituaries."

"What some might call morbid curios-

ities are proven true."

There's also a kind of relief—again, no matter one's political leanings—when someone else's misfortune gives the observer a break from the real world. "What is it? The bigger they are, the harder they fall," McLaughlin said. "There's something about the building up of people and then rapidly tearing them down."

Tecce said immersion in someone else's misfortune gives the observer a break from the real world.

"Why would somebody watch the O.J. Simpson trial? Why would someone watch a train wreck? Those activities can be horrifying, but at least they get us off from thinking about our income taxes, our breakup in a relationship, our house that's falling apart and needs painting, our car that's no good," he said.

But such distraction only works in the short term, Tecce said—and too much distraction is bad.

"People who watch soap operas all day feel good because they see these tragic figures—divorces, abortions, all that stuff," he said. "But you know what? In the long term, they're wasting time because they're not doing much."

So they didn't accomplish anything in '98, and so '99 is kind of a depressing year. It's a self-defeating cycle. It's no different from overeating, alcoholism, smoking cigarettes, all those things are also displacement activities. Conversely, if the misfortunes of others hold little or no allure, that's a good sign," Tecce said.

"If you and I are doing well, I can not into watching all that stuff," he said. "I don't need it right now. I have my own business to attend to. The day you forget to pick up your mail, that's a good sign."

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LA Times-Washington Post News Service

ity is also a psychological means of displacement, or distraction," said Joseph Tecce, associate professor of psychology at Boston College.

"When things aren't going well in our lives, as far as what we are doing, we can feel good about what other people aren't doing," Tecce said.

"When Mickey Rooney has his 12th marriage or (someone famous) is in rehab because of sex addiction, we say, 'Oh,

Food

Onions, Sweet 'n' Slow



North the time: a caramelized onion and goat

By Russ Parsons

ALL ANYONE wants to talk about these days is quick cooking. Let's slow down a minute. Last week, I cooked onions for two hours.

The result was a sweet, limp, golden mass. It's not what you're going for every time—or even most of the time—but it's perfect for some things. And it's a great exercise in self-control.

To begin, peel and slice the onions quite thin, less than an inch wide. Here's a hint: When you peel the onions, rinse them in cold running water. This reduces the amount of sulfur compounds and keeps you from crying so much.

You can cut the onions somewhat thicker if you choose, but the thicker you cut them, the longer they will take to cook. If you cut them too thin, on the other hand, you'll find they tend to scorch.

Put the onions in a large skillet that you can cover tightly. I know this seems like an impossible amount of onions, but you'll find that when they're cooked this long, onions reduce in mass like spinach. What seems way too much ends up looking like not nearly enough.

Add about a cup of oil and toss the onions with the oil in the cold pan. Don't worry about measuring the oil too closely. Your goal here is to just barely coat the onions. You'll find that almost all of the oil will end up being drained off anyway.

Starting with a cold pan gives you more control over how slowly you heat the onions. Cook things in a hot pan if you want to brown them quickly. If you want to cook them for a long time without browning them, start them in a cold pan.

Start the onions with the lid on over medium heat. The lid will help the onions cook more evenly—the top layer will be cooked almost as much as the bottom.

Stir every once in a while and watch as they release their water. After about 15 minutes, those onions that started out just barely moistened with olive oil will be swimming in liquid. Onions are about 90 percent water. When they're raw, the water is held within the cells. As the water heats up, it expands, breaking down the cells, and empties into the pan.

Once the onions are limp and moist, reduce

the heat to low and continue cooking under cover. You're trying to stretch the process out as long as possible. The more slowly the onions cook, the more evenly they will cook. This way everything will caramelize at about the same time and the onions will be thoroughly cooked all the way through, rather than browned on the outside and crisp in the center.

How long will this take? It depends on what your concept of low heat is and how much time you have. It can be reasonably done in 45 minutes to an hour. If you're in no hurry, the longer it takes, the safer you are.

The goal here is to brown the onions without blackening. Browning accentuates the sweetness of the onion. Blackening creates bitterness. Stir more frequently at the end. Your onions will probably start browning in the center of the pan first, so keep them moving every 5 minutes or so.

Now, you may be thinking that if the goal is a sweet cooked onion, why not start with a raw sweet onion? Don't bother. Sweet onions—Vidalia, Maui, Walla, Walla, etc.—actually contain less sugar than regular brown storage onions. They merely taste sweeter when they're raw because they are also lower in the sulfur compounds that give onions their bite. Since those compounds are heat-sensitive, they go away quickly during cooking. After two hours—or even 15 minutes—they are gone.

When the onions are almost finished, take off the lid. This allows the last of the onion water to evaporate. At that point, you'll find you have a mass of limp, golden onions swimming in olive oil. All of the other moisture will have evaporated. If you choose, you can drain the onions in a strainer to get rid of almost all the oil.

Caramelized onions—that's what these are—need to be used with care. They're so sweet that unless they're paired with similarly forceful ingredients, they will quickly overwhelm a dish.

Finished with a little red wine vinegar and some fresh sage, they're perfect served with sautéed liver. Cooked with some cubed smoky bacon and a little rosemary, they make a hearty winter pasta sauce.

That's my kind of quick cooking. ■

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The virtues of vegetarianism

By Ehsan Nimir
Special to The Star

VEGETARIANISM MEANS eating only vegetarian food. The term vegetarian was derived from Latin. It basically means wholesome, lively, sound, and fresh. Many people, especially vegetarians, believe red meat—the result of killing animals—is harmful to physical and spiritual growth.

It has been proven that non-vegetarian food is likely to get contaminated more easily and has a very short shelf life. It can also lead to serious health problems. On the other hand, vegetarian food stays fresher, for longer, and rarely leads to serious health breakdowns.

A lot of people believe that non-vegetarian food is richer in proteins and therefore more healthier, but this is not true. Only a total vegetarian menu, wisely planned, can give a rich balanced diet, providing everything that a body needs.

A vegetarian diet consists of plenty of carbohydrates, proteins, vitamins, minerals, whilst reducing the intake of fats.

Mother nature has been generous; it has provided us with plenty of vegetables, fruits, spices, herbs, nuts, grains, pulses, etc., which are used to create delicious cuisines which vary from place to place, state to state, and country to country. Thus it is now the era of international food.

There are three categories of vegetarians: Lacto-ovo-vegetarians, who are allowed to eat dairy products and eggs in their diet. Secondly, there are Lacto-vegetarians whose diet includes dairy products, but no eggs. Lastly, there are the Vegans, who do not eat any animal product at all, which means no milk, eggs and even honey.

Naturally, when one eats non-vegetarian food, one also consumes—together with the proteins—the chemicals that were injected into the animals to either prevent diseases or to fatten them up.

But there is a philosophical issue at stake here. It is believed that when eating red and white meat, the negative feelings like pain, anger, greed and fear come to permeate into the cells of those who eat it.

These also pave the way for bad diseases. This is just an assumption. It has been backed by long scientific research. Studies revealed heart diseases, strokes and other recent types of cancer are increasing every year and these are directly linked to the consumption of red meat.

Old-fashioned wisdom says that when eating meat, blood, which is a form of life, is consumed. This is not true. Blood is a form of life, but it is not a part of the body. It is a waste product of the body and is excreted out of the body.

Sweet Dreams

Saucy Chocolate Fudge

By Russ Parsons

MOST DESSERT sauces are well-planned bit players that are happy going through life doing little but pointing out how delicious everything else around them is.

What could be more innocuous than "Creme Anglaise," for example? And although a raspberry puree is delicious, it is mainly there to complement the chocolate.

Not fudge sauces. They stomp on stage accompanied by the blaring of trumpets and the beating of drums. They dance around, waving their arms and shouting, "Look at me!"

As if it were remotely possible to miss them. A good fudge sauce is voluptuous, thick and creamy, and even slightly sticky. The flavor is a raucous combination of rich chocolate and sometimes slightly bitter notes, with a liberal dosing of vanilla extract—or even Cognac—behind the ear for good measure.

At the same time, it would be a mistake to confuse their brashness with simplicity. Because their flavor lacks delicacy doesn't mean the same is true for their preparation. A fudge sauce can be a tricky thing to put together.

While it's fairly simple to make a chocolate sauce—melt chocolate in heated cream, a kind of thin "ganache," actually—giving that sauce the thick, rich texture of fudge takes some doing.

As does getting it to keep that texture when it's poured over freezing-cold ice cream. If you've tried that with a regular chocolate sauce, you've found that the chocolate tends to form a hard shell on the ice cream or separate into waxy little bits.

Why doesn't this happen with fudge sauce? Because the chocolate is bound up with corn syrup. While most sugars begin to crystallize as soon as they are heated, corn syrup is a complex combination of various sugars and carbohydrates in a viscous solution. Its very nature inhibits crystallization, even when regular crystalline sugar is added to it.

I made almost a dozen fudge sauces from various cookbooks. Of those, there were four I really liked. The ones from master baker Nick Malgieri's new book, "Chocolate" (HarperCollins, out in October), and Nancy Silverton's old book "Desserts" (Harper & Row, 1986) had good flavor, but to my taste were too rich and sticky, even for fudge sauces. I want a fudge sauce that has body but doesn't coat your mouth.

Much closer was ever-reliable Helen Witty's fudge sauce from "Fancy Pantry" (Workman, 1986). Its flavor is pure nostalgia—it tastes just like really good brownie batter. The texture was better—it coated without feeling sticky—but it was a bit grainy.

At first, I thought I had found the perfect fudge sauce in Rose Levy Beranbaum's "The Cake Bible" (William Morrow, 1988). It had it all, a seductively smooth texture, a complex chocolate flavor and a delicate aftertaste of butter.

Unfortunately, that delicacy was its undoing when I tasted it on vanilla ice cream. Although it would have been perfect served beside some kind of pastry, on ice cream the chocolate flavor lacked the edge it needed to compete with the other flavors.

I could see the potential in both Witty's and Beranbaum's sauces, but they are entirely different. Witty's is pure innocence, a taste straight from childhood (well, actually it hasn't been all that long since I licked out a brownie bowl). Beranbaum's is about as sophisticated as a fudge sauce can be. It's high-fashion fudge.

I decided to fine-tune them, making each more like what I thought it should be.

To improve the texture in the Witty recipe, I increased the ratio of corn syrup to sugar. Although too much corn syrup makes sauce sticky, too little won't keep the sugar from crystallizing. Increasing the corn syrup from one-quarter cup to one-

half cup and then cutting the sugar from 2 cups to 1 cup, turned out a sauce with a lovely satiny finish.

To give the Beranbaum sauce the edge it needed, first I tried adding a bit more cocoa (unsweetened cocoa provides a beautifully bitter tinge to chocolate sauces). But the thing that ended up working the best was reducing the butter. With the butter cut from 3 tablespoons to 2, the chocolate tastes that were already there were able to shine through.

When these two sauces were tried in the Los Angeles Times Test Kitchen, neither of them worked perfectly. The Witty-based sauce was still a little grainy; the Beranbaum-based sauce was too thin.

It turns out the graininess of the Witty sauce wasn't entirely due to the sugar-corn syrup ratio after all, but to something much simpler—the wrong chocolate. When we substituted a good brand of bittersweet chocolate for the combination of semi-sweetened and unsweetened Bakers brand chocolate, the graininess went away.

As for the Beranbaum sauce, it took some experimentation before I remembered that after testing the final batch, I'd doubled the recipe (it makes only two-thirds of a cup, which seemed kind of skimpy). Cooked in that quantity though, I never could get the sauce to thicken. When I cut the recipe in half, it came together like a dream. My guess is that by the time that quantity of corn syrup is cooked enough to thicken, the water has begun to come out of solution.

When the Test Kitchen began playing with different fudge sauces, many tasters liked the Silverton sauce best of all, and for exactly the same reasons I didn't like it as well—its rich, mouth-filling stickiness and austere lack of sweetness. Go figure.

So here are all three. This recipe is based on the one in Helen Witty's "Fancy Pantry" (Workman, 1986). ■

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Nancy Silverton's Pearls And Mink Fudge Sauce

7 ounces bittersweet chocolate, cut into 2-inch pieces
1 cup sugar
1 cup light corn syrup
1 cup plus 2 tablespoons water
1 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
1 tablespoon instant coffee
3 tablespoons Cognac or brandy

Melt chocolate pieces in large stainless-steel mixing bowl (or top of double boiler) over saucepan of gently simmering water. Be sure water does not touch bottom of mixing bowl to prevent chocolate from burning. Turn off heat and keep warm over warm water until ready to use.

Bring sugar, corn syrup, water, cocoa powder and instant coffee to boil in large saucepan over medium-high heat. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer 1 to 2 minutes, stirring constantly to dissolve cocoa powder and sugar and to prevent burning on bottom of pan.

Whisk in melted chocolate. Boil hot fudge for few minutes to reduce to consistency you desire. It should be quite viscous and surface should have glossy shine. Cool slightly and beat in Cognac.

Makes about 2 cups. Each 2-tablespoon serving: 118 calories; 13 mg sodium; 0 mg cholesterol; 6 grams fat; 19 grams carbohydrates; 2 grams protein; 0.46 gram fibre.

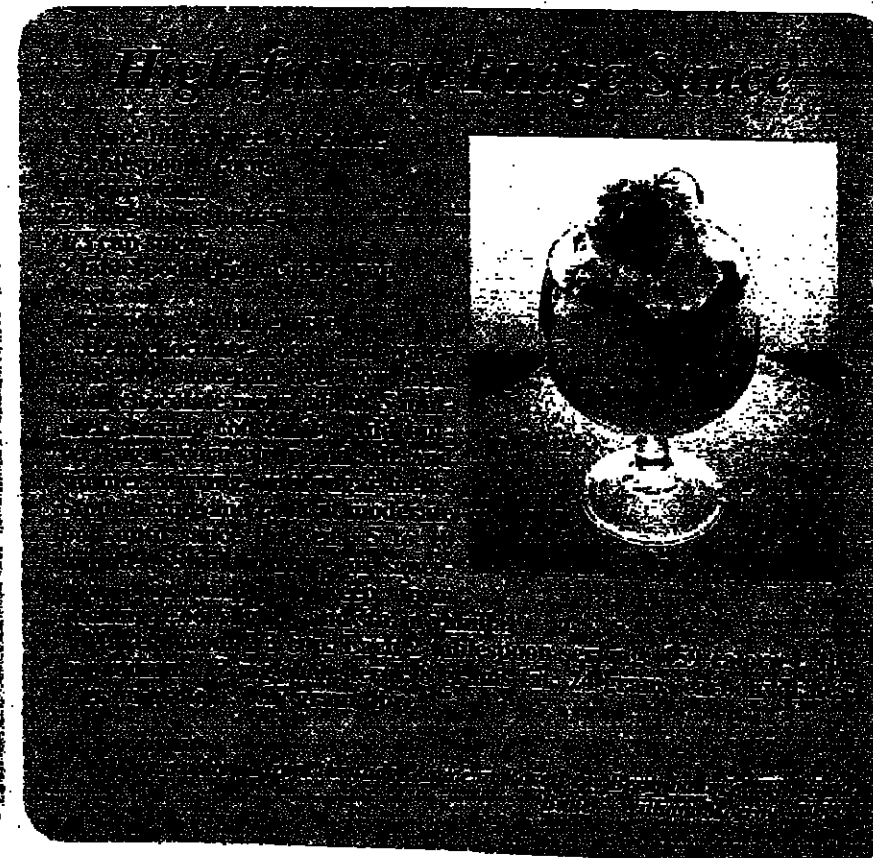
This recipe is adapted from Nancy Silverton's "Desserts" (Harper & Row).



Gingham Fudge Sauce

1 cup evaporated milk
1 cup sugar
1 teaspoon salt
1 cup light corn syrup
6 tablespoons butter
6 ounces bittersweet chocolate
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
Heat evaporated milk, sugar, salt, corn syrup, butter and chocolate in saucepan over heat, stirring constantly until sugar, butter and chocolate are thoroughly melted. Continue cooking, stirring frequently until sauce thickens, about 10 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in vanilla extract.

Makes about 3 cups, 1/2 cup per tablespoon serving. 150 calories; 72 mg sodium; 11 mg cholesterol; 6 grams fat; 19 grams carbohydrates; 1 gram fibre; 0.13 gram fibre.





Al Naouri group moves from success to success

By Iham Sadeq
Star Staff Writer

THE LATE sixties and early seventies were great times to be in shipping. Containerization was being introduced, onto the world's main trade routes and there was an excellent time to start a shipping company because there were so many opportunities.

For a Taiwanese company, there were added advantages. It was beginning to grow rapidly and exports were rising. And there was a strong demand for a local carrier to offer good service at attractive rates. It was against this background that Evergreen was established in 1968 and since then it continued to achieve progress year after year. Realizing the impor-



ance of a high degree for management skills. Evergreen always believed that people are the company's most important assets and thus give much care to training new recruits in its systems and philosophy.

Operating as an agent for Evergreen in Jordan, Al Naouri Group was able within a record time of experience in the shipping market, to attract the most well-known shipping line to accredit Aqaba port as a passage for its cargoes. Headed by its adamant and energetic chairman, Mr Ibrahim Al Naouri, the group was able to maintain a noticeable success in the field of

shipping, of course added to its worldwide experience in the multi-modal transport. As an agent for the Evergreen Taiwanese Shipping line, Mr Al Naouri told *The Star* "We started in 1994 with limited scope, but year by year, Evergreen has become the ever biggest shipping line that serves Aqaba port, either in imports or exports."

This means that the group was able to expand in the areas serviced by the line to cover most parts of the world, which gives Jordanian exporters and importers an excellent opportunity to explore new markets for their activities, including the buying and selling of commodities.

Reinforcing the concept of diversified services and abilities, Al Naouri group operates as an agent for Eva Airline for cargo and passengers. "The introduction of this airline is a bonus to Jordanian importers and exporters, as it offers almost a daily flight to and from Dubai to the East and West," Mr Al Naouri added.

Al Naouri Group is ranked as one of the first among worldwide agents in the annual report of Evergreen. ■

Taiwanese-Jordanian relations are stronger than ever

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr Francis T.N. Chang is the Representative of the Taiwan Commercial Office in Amman. Mr Chang started his career at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Taiwan in 1971. Since then he has served in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and now in Jordan. He spoke to *The Star* about Jordan-Taiwan relations, and his country's commercial ties with the Middle East. Excerpts follow:

Can you evaluate Jordan-Taiwan relations?

Jordan-Taiwan (ROC) relations are good and friendly. It goes back to the early stage of the Royal Hashemite Kingdom highlighted by the visit of HM King Hussein to Taiwan in 1959, which established the foundation of this lasting friendship between the two peoples and leaderships.

We do appreciate the friendship of Jordan toward Taiwan's people, which is valuable spiritual support for them to sail through all kinds of difficulties.

The trade relations between the two countries has been steadily increasing. The first half of 1998, the two-way trade volume totaled US\$50 million with 10 per cent increase compared to last year. Taiwan's export to Jordan reached US\$39 million while imports from Jordan US\$11 million. Most of Jordanian exports to Taiwan are phosphates, potash, mineral or chemical fertilizers, insecticide and aluminum waste etc. Main products that Jordan imports from Taiwan are textiles, synthetic yarn, plastic articles, auto parts, knitted fabrics, rubber tires, machinery parts and computers. I am confident that the economic and trade relationship between the two countries will be further strengthened in the years to come with the con-

certed efforts by both countries.

In order to share the experiences, Jordan and Taiwan have been conducting scientific & technological cooperation in two projects of computer science and mold technology, which turned out to be very successful cooperation.

Besides, Taiwan has continuously invited Jordanian officials and experts to attend various kinds of seminars and training courses such as: International Trade Promotion Program, Industrial Cooperation System Seminar, The ROC Experience of Economic development course, Planning, Development & Management of Industrial Parks and Export Processing Zones in Taiwan Course, Efficient Management Skills for Small and Medium Enterprises, tax Policy & Economic Development Seminar, Course for Agricultural Credit System & Rural Development in Taiwan, and the Seminar on Small/Medium Enterprise Assistance Policy in Taiwan.

How does Taiwan view its role in the region? I am talking here about the economic role.

The Middle East is one of the important trading partners for us. In 1997, the trade volume between the Middle East and Taiwan reached US\$6.9 billion with 7% growth rate. Taiwan exported to ME US\$2.7 billion worth of products, with 3% growth. Taiwan imported from ME US\$4.2 billion with 3.6% growth. The Middle East is a major source for us for the natural raw materials such as crude oil, natural gas and phosphate, which are vital to our industrial development. So we attach greater importance to this region.

Can you tell me something about the Taiwanese economy, and its development?



Mr Chang

Thanks to Taiwan's sound economic fundamentals, Taiwan's economy in 1997 not only luckily weathered the Asian financial turbulence, but also continued to grow. Its economic growth rate accelerated to a 7-year high of 6.8 per cent, one of the best in the world, while the rate of increase in consumer prices dropped to a ten-year low of 0.9%.

Taiwan's gross national product (GNP) ranked 18th largest worldwide and its per capita GNP reached US\$13,233, being the 25th largest in the world (among countries with a population exceeding one million), while its foreign-exchange reserves of around US\$80 billion were third largest and almost without debt. Taiwan's total foreign trade volume in 1997 reached US\$236.55 billion, with 8.3 per cent increase compared to 1996. Taiwan's exports in 1997 were US\$122 billion with 5.3 per cent growth rate. Its imports were US\$114.4 billion with 11.78% growth rate. Taiwan was the world's 14th biggest exporter and 15th biggest importer, and its total two-way trade was 14th largest worldwide.

Taiwan's economy strength was rated the eighth most powerful in the world by the 1998 World Competitiveness Yearbook compiled by the Lausanne-based International Institute for Management Development (IMD), last year was 17th on the list. The IMD attributed Taiwan's leap in the rankings to its ability to generate higher added-value products and its bright economic prospects.

Taiwan was ranked the world's sixth most competitive

economy, up two from last year's eighth place standing, by the Geneva-based World Economic Forum.

In general, Taiwan's economic performance in 1997 was rather brilliant, but our Economic Affairs Minister still warned the country against complacency. We have to try harder to reach our set goal of making Taiwan an Asia-Pacific Operational Center, and an island of science and technology.

In computer technology, Taiwan is a leading player in the world. Is this likely to be maintained in the face of competition from other countries?

Since 1979, my government had chosen the information technology industry as a thrust industry. With concerted efforts by the government and the enterprises during these years, Taiwan has become the 3rd biggest production country for information technology industry in the world, just after U.S. and Japan. Currently, 60 per cent of the world's computer motherboards, 40 per cent of personal computers, 53 per cent of monitors are manufactured in Taiwan. The vital factors for the successful information technology industry are flexibility, speed, cost and logic supporting capability. Taiwan benefits from its strong and resilient economy, also owns ample human resources, good and sound peripheral supporting industries so that its information manufacturers surely will be the indispensable partners in the world system of work distribution for the future information technology industry.

The so-called economic crisis in the Far East is taking its toll on the countries of the region. How is it affecting the Taiwanese economy?

Taiwan is not immune to any international financial crisis. The devaluation of Asian currencies in the second half of last year has caused the devaluation of Taiwan's currency and the reduction of its export trade. The Asian economy is unlikely to recover in the short term. The demand for Taiwan products in the Asian markets has declined, defeating our trade promotion efforts. But it is the proper time to depend on Taiwan's domestic market for growth. What we can do to stimulate domestic demand is to increase public construction projects and facilitate private investments. Now my Government is carrying out programs for this purpose. It is estimated that the total amount of private investments will increase 16 per cent this year.

Taiwan's economic growth rate this year will be 5.3 per cent, although a drop from estimated 6 per cent. But compared to the economies in Asia which are almost all in recession, this growth rate is still not bad and could be in the top 5 in the world.

Economic property needs greater stability. Is this a correct phrase? I am here talking about your relations with China.

It is true that economic prosperity needs greater stable environment. When the tense relations across the Taiwan Straits almost developed into military confrontation in 1996, Taiwan's stock market and economic growth rate of that year dropped, in spite of government's additional efforts. At the same time, the other side world have had the similar disadvantageous effects.

It should be noted that the situation across the Taiwan Straits has developed recently. Both sides agreed to resume the Koo-Wang (two sides) heads of responsible organizations meeting, this October. This meeting is expected to become a landmark event for friendly exchanges between the two sides under the objective of promoting exchanges between the Straits Exchange Foundation of Republic of China (Taiwan) and Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Strait of People Republic of China (PRC), and improving cross-strait relations. Also, it is hoped that the Koo-Wang meeting will generate a momentum for the resumption of SEF-ARATS institutionalized negotiations and exchanges—which have been suspended for more than three years. We hope that stability and prosperity will prevail in our region. ■

Taiwan

Springboard to the Asian-Pacific

By Chi Shive

IN TODAY'S global economy, the world is integrated as never before, and every region has a crucial role to play. This is particularly true for the Asia-Pacific. In 1985, the Asia-Pacific region accounted for 18 per cent of global trade; by 1997, this figure had risen to 26 per cent. The region also leads the world in shipbuilding and the manufacture of consumer goods and information technology products. Even with the recent financial crisis and subsequent slowdown in growth, Asia remains a huge market and vast potential.

Recognizing that Taiwan is uniquely endowed to serve local and multinational enterprises as a base of investment and operations in this region, the ROC government has been actively promoting Taiwan as an Asia-Pacific regional operations center. The goal of this project is to foster on the island a highly liberalized and globalized economic environment, thereby encouraging the smooth flow of commodities, personnel, capital, and information. By upgrading the overall economy, the ROC government hopes to transform Taiwan into a very open market where entrepreneurs are willing to invest and develop high-value added industries such as manufacturing, sea transportation, air transportation, finance, telecommunications and media.

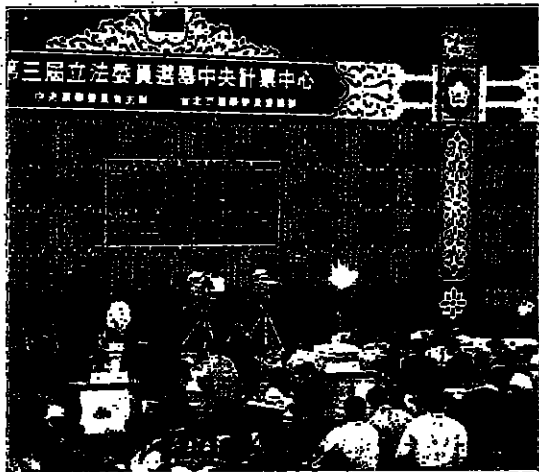
And what makes Taiwan ideal? Geography for a start. Taiwan sits at the center of the Asia-Pacific region. The average flight time from Taipei to seven major cities in Asia and the Pacific (i.e., Sydney, Singapore, Tokyo, Seoul, Manila, Shanghai and Hong Kong) is only two hours and 55 minutes. Taiwan enjoys an advanced industrial base. In 1997, Taiwan enterprises were the world's top manufacturers of

over 15 products, 10 of which were related to information technology. Currently, 60 per cent of the world's computer motherboards and 40 per cent of personal computers are manufactured in Taiwan. Taiwan also benefits from a strong, resilient economy, as illustrated by the island's relatively favorable performance during the region's recent economic turmoil. Several factors contribute to this resiliency: a high rate of self-financing among entrepreneurs, sound financial structures, and the flexibility to rapidly respond to change.

Another important influence is the ROC government's rigorous promotion of its liberalization strategy, aimed at sharpening the competitive edge of Taiwan's enterprises in the global market.

According to US credit rating agency Standard & Poor's, Taiwan ranks just below Japan and Singapore in terms of credit risk. In its Annual Global Competitiveness Report for 1998, the International Market Development Group placed Taiwan in 16th position. The IMD also affirmed Taiwan's strength in science and technology, ranking the island seventh. This ranking represents an impressive advance from Taiwan's 1992 science and technology rating of 19. Indeed, after surpassing Hong Kong in 1995 and Singapore in 1998, Taiwan's scientific and technological prowess stands second only to Japan in the Asian region.

Scientific and technological talent, a comprehensive industrial structure, convenient transportation and telecommunications facilities, and four-



technology" island. The ROC government is now laboring to further prepare Taiwan for the 21st century, promoting government re-engineering, pursuing public infrastructure projects under the Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) model, and pushing for further improvements in the investment climate. At the same time, the ROC is also actively seeking to attract talent from around the

ishing entrepreneurial spirit all underpin the solid foundation on which Taiwan is being developed into a "science and

world to come to Taiwan in an effort to enhance research and development capabilities within Taiwan industry. Tai-

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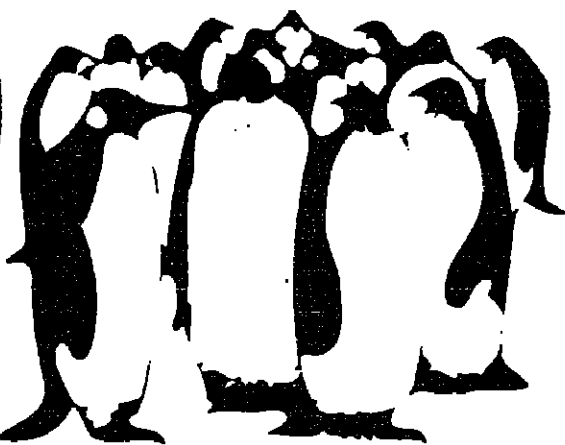
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We wish them great progress and success



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ROUND
OWN



The Bavarians are in Amman

LOCALS AND tourists alike in Amman enjoyed the music of the Bavarian Group (Sepp's Gusmann Band), who came all the way from Germany. The group is currently in Amman, to perform at the Oktoberfest, which will be held at the Hotel Inter-Continental (Jordan).

The Oktoberfest is an annual German festival, held in the city of Munich—the capital of Bavaria.

On the behalf of the mayor of Darmstadt, Mr. Gussmann granted Marwan Al Haddid, the mayor for Amman, a special present from the German city. Mr. Al Haddid thanked the leader of the band, and in turn,



delivered a message to the Mayor of Darmstadt. Warm greetings were extended from Amman to the German city. Mr. Al Haddid

also commented on the friendly relations between Jordan and Germany, and looked forward to continued cooperation in the future. He wished the band a happy stay in Amman.

To welcome the band, the Amman traditional dance group presented the 'Dabkeh' dance.

The Bavarian Oktoberfest festival is being held over two days (7 and 8 October) at the Inter-Continental.

The event has been sponsored by Royal Jordanian, Opel, Henninger Beer, UMS, Chiquita, and Aramex. ■

OFF THE WALL

Children are worth saving

By Rana Haddad
Special to The Star

LAST MONDAY, the Arab Child Day. Many people appeared on television and made hopeful speeches, and promised a better future for children worldwide.

Myself, I promised never to celebrate this occasion until I could be sure that there are no more stories like those I heard and witnessed last week.

Last Thursday, I spent one night in hospital—I had to take care of my little sister who fell ill after being vaccinated at school. I wasn't able to sleep, so I walked around, watched people, and listened to their cries. It was a night to remember.

It was a depressing scene. Amani—a three-year-old girl—used to have a typical baby face, but not any more. She was in an accident at home, when boiling oil was knocked onto her face. Amani's face doesn't look baby-faced anymore.

Four months ago, Omar came into this world, and I'm sure he didn't expect to start suffering so early. He was lying beside his mother when she fell asleep. Omar fell off the bed and fractured his skull.

The suffering continues. There was the story of little Youssef who had a needle stuck deep into his leg. It was only after two weeks of agonizing, that his mother—a nurse—took him to hospital. The reason for the pain soon became apparent: Omar was in hospital because he was hit by a car. At the time he was heading to school, carrying his school bag over his shoulder and holding a red flower, which he planned to give to his teacher.

At this point, Layla's grandma finished telling her stories, and I began to wonder about all the characters and events that I had heard.

The question that bothers Layla and many others is why and for how long? I believe that our children must suffer if they are to succeed, but we shouldn't be the cause of their suffering. Kids, who are the fruit of our love and ambition, suffer because of our irresponsible behavior.

Another question that bothered Layla and I, is that women—no matter how old, how well educated, or financially secure—sometimes have children, when they know that they are unable to raise and care for them properly!

We should all share the responsibility. I think it is time we started to save our children, rather than celebrate them, because they are all worth saving. ■

By Kofi Attah
Special to The Star

HILAL MOHAMMED Yahya is not what one expects of a novice artist. Although he lacks an educational background, Yahya is a promising young artist with a vision. Few people in the art world know of him, but I feel that a lot of people will soon appreciate his skills. His latest exhibition, 'The Landscape of Amman', is currently being shown at the Plastic Artists Association of Jordan.

The exhibition features 23 elegant oil paintings, loaded with innovation and artistry. They fluctuate between landscapes of caves, to the hills and valleys of Amman. After a hectic period, dedicated to painting, Yahya managed to choose his themes, through experimenting with various colors and textures. As a result, when you visit his show, you will appreciate the outstanding charisma of his works. His paintings are bright and vivid, portraying the charm of Amman's natural layout.

The portrayals of natural landscapes are interwoven with delicacy, depicting a background of colorful images. One of the paintings that is guaranteed to capture your soul, is that of a cave dwelling.

Yahya's style is characterized as simple and detailed, which has saved him from falling into the pitfall of imitation. His long apprenticeship at the Association's Workshop, working with master artists, has added to his

humble experience.

"The challenge is to be creative and original," said Yahya. Born in Kafir al Shey in Egypt, Yahya has never had the chance to go into the art world,

exhibition reflect the immense spirituality of the Egyptian love of colors. In painting Nos. 11 and 12, he hypnotizes the visitor with the steep streets of Amman, portraying them running through a valley, and cutting through green hills. In addition, he discloses the daily life of uplanders in a lively structure of realistic colors.

His cinematic eye has successfully mirrored the everyday captions of Amman. His brush is like the voice of a poet, celebrating natural scenes of hills, rocks and other fascinating settings, like the magical beauty of plains and deserts.

The most innovative and attractive thing about the exhibition is the artist's masterful ability to paint and depict real life imagery. With the experience he has acquired through observing other members of the association, Yahya has developed a language that powerfully communicates with the viewer's mind.

Despite the fact that Amman is not loaded with natural imagery, his work transcends the realm of reality into a world of surrealistic fantasy. His desert scene draws you to the nature of village life.

Yahya is hoping for a breakthrough in his career, which will place him up amongst the other famous contemporary artists. However, at the moment, Yahya is not in a rush for stardom, as he feels it may interfere with his style. "My primary objective is to get my audience to appreciate and enjoy my paintings," he adds, confidently.

However, he has entered the art scene with an enthusiasm that distinguishes him from many other artists. His extraordinary ability to avoid boring subjects and monotonous imitations, has paved the way for the presentation of his own artistic interpretations. The show will run until the 20 October. ■



artist, not even I," he said. As an errand boy in the Association, he was inspired by the members there, and acquired a traditional technique of painting. The central themes of his



International Book Exhibition

THE CITY Hall in Ras Al Ain is a splendid building, where one can amble around and enjoy many architectural wonders.

However, the City Hall is not only a place of leisure and relaxation. It is also the site of many cultural and intellectual exhibitions.

The International Book Exhibition is the latest show to be held at the City Hall. Held in a huge tent outside, the exhibition offers a wide variety of books from all around the world. Several international book companies are taking part in this year.

The quality and quantity of the books on display are a veritable temptation—you will find it almost impossible to leave empty handed. You will find a

diversity of topics, from children's literature to science and technology.

Visitors from all age groups are attending the exhibition.

One owner of a publishing house said, "Despite the very good attendance rates, the sales have been a little disappointing, even with the many discounted prices on offer." Five books will cost you around JD 10, which is quite respectable.

Mr. Adnan Zahran, the owner of Zahran Publishing House attributed this decline in sales to the current economic climate and the decrease in people's purchasing power, especially students. The exhibition will run until 10 October. ■

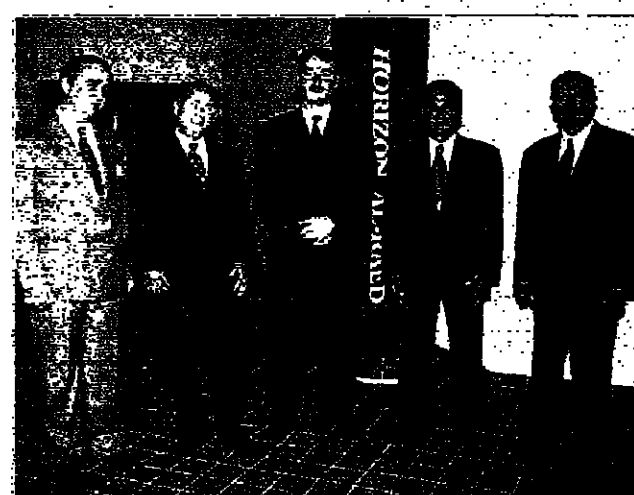
HORIZON AI-RAED

Celebrates its first anniversary

HORIZON AI-RAED, the advertising and marketing agency, held a cocktail reception at the Amman Marriott on the occasion of the company's first year anniversary since the merger between the Horizon Amman office and Al-Raed Advertising. More than 300 guests attended the reception on 16 September to celebrate the occasion.

Mr. Raed Darwish, managing director of the Amman office, gave a welcoming speech to the guests on behalf of the entire office and Mr. Rafiq Saadeh, CEO of Horizon network, who was on a special visit to Amman for the occasion accompanied by several managing directors from the Horizon network.

The opening speech by Darwish also gave a brief history



of the network from its beginnings in the 1976 and growth throughout the region to the

exclusive affiliation with FCB, the number one agency in the US and sixth worldwide in terms of billing.

Rather than being just another cocktail reception, the creative juices of the HORIZON AI-RAED team were squeezed out to bring a little entertainment to the evening.

A 15-minute play on the history of advertising from the stone age to modern times was performed. The play, entitled 'The medium as the message', with a look at how the evolution of advertising is largely shaped by the advent of new media and how the recent trend in advertising is a return to personal communications via the media, as it was thousands of years ago. ■

AGENDA

Exhibitions

■ Paintings by 18 artists from Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Palestine, and Lebanon at the Al Mashriq Gallery, Shmashani. It continues until 1 November.

■ Under the patronage of HM Queen Noor, the Cervantes Institute is showing an exhibition entitled Goya's Caprichos. The exhibition will open on the 13 October, at 6 pm, and will run until 23 October.

■ A joint exhibition for Arab artists continues at the Hamorabi Gallery until 15 October.

■ An exhibition by Lamia Jamal of her sculptural artworks opened on the 7 October at the French Cultural Center. The exhibition will run until 26 October.

Films

■ A film entitled Goya will be shown at the Cervantes Institute on the 14 October, at 6:30 pm. The film is directed by Jesus Fernandez Santos and captures Goya's most important works: the etchings, war scenes, bullfight sequences, capriccios and portraits of royalty and friends.

■ A French film enti-

Conference

■ The Le Meridien hotel will be holding a conference entitled Religion and Society between the 12 October and 15 October. Sponsored by the Royal Institute of Religious Studies and German Cultural Center, the conference will look into how Muslim Turks live in Germany.

■ The American Center will be showing Wall Street (starring Michael Douglas and Charlie Sheen) on 8 October, at 5:00pm.

■ The British Council will be showing Sense and Sensibility on 13 October, at 6:00pm.

Workshop

■ The British Council will be holding a number of workshops, discussing Modern English Literature. On the 12 October, the Jewel in the Crown-The Indian Subcontinent will be reviewed.

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مركز الامن الوطني

The Star's TV GUIDE

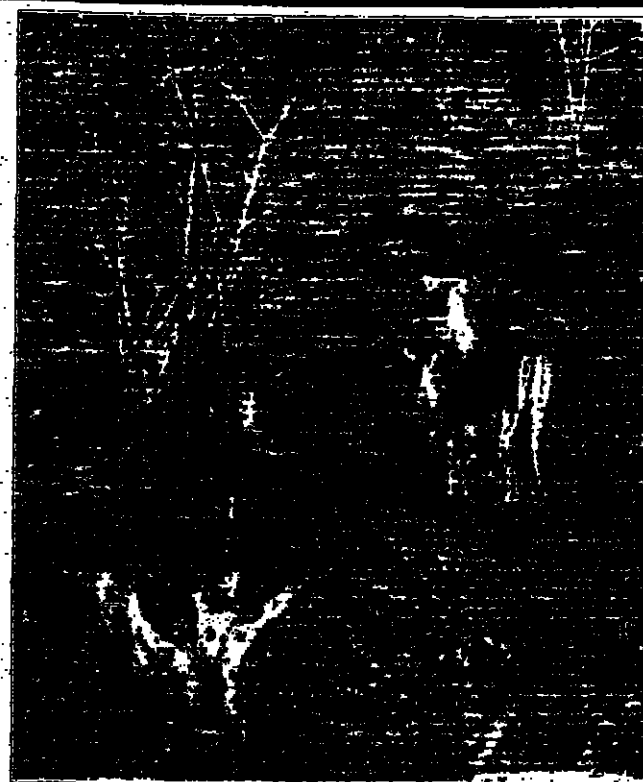
Programs on JTV
from 10—17 October.

ENGLISH PROGRAMS

SATURDAY
3:00—Holy Koran
3:10—Animanics (Cartoon)
3:30—Clowning Around
4:00—Neighbors (Drama)
4:30—Peer Pressure (Doc.)
5:00—French Prog.
6:00—Wind at my back
7:00—News in French
7:15—French Prog.
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Murphy Brown
8:00—Sirens
9:15—ABC of Democracy
10:00—News At Ten
10:30—Film
12:00—Country Music

SUNDAY
3:00—Holy Koran
3:10—Pink Panther (Cart.)
3:30—Pumpkin Patch
3:50—The Adventures of the Black Stallion
4:00—Discover The Wild Animals
5:00—The American Chart Show
6:00—French Program
7:00—News in French
7:15—French Programs
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Life's Most Embarrassing Moments
8:00—French Program
8:30—Renegade
9:00—Farming & Ecology
10:00—News in English
10:30—Drama

MONDAY
3:00—Holy Koran
3:10—Highlander (Cartoon)
3:30—The Gentle from Down Under (Drama)
4:00—Neighbors (Drama)
4:30—Last Frontiers (Doc.)
5:00—French Program (Doc.)
6:00—Wind At My Back
7:00—News in French



Discover The Wild Animals, Sunday at 4:00 pm.

7:15—French Program
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Hope & Gloria
8:00—Perspective
8:30—World Net
9:10—Good Guys, Bad Guys
10:00—News at Ten
10:30—Drama

TUESDAY
3:00—Holy Koran
3:10—The Pink Panther
3:30—Small Talk (Quiz)
4:00—Neighbors
4:30—Life Choices (Doc.)
5:00—Royal Blood (Doc.)

WEDNESDAY
3:00—Holy Koran
3:10—The Adventures of Teddy Ruxpin



Amman cinemas

- Philadelphia I (Tel: 4634149): Last Man Standing
- Philadelphia II (Tel: 4634149): Bound
- Galleria I (Tel: 079 33430): Armageddon
- Galleria II (Tel: 079 33430): Mr Magoo
- Plaza (Tel: 5699238): Al Za'een (Arabic)
- Concord I (Tel: 5677420): Nasser (Arabic)
- Concord II (Tel: 5677420): Up Close & Personal

3:30—Halfway Across The Galaxy & Turn Left
4:30—Masters Of The Maze
5:00—French Program
6:15—Wind At My Back
7:00—News in French
7:15—French Program
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Keeping Mum (Com.)
8:00—Envoy Special
8:30—Kung-Fu
9:10—Great Moments Of Science & Technology
9:30—Faces & Places
10:00—News at Ten
10:30—Chicago Hope
12:00—Bugs (Drama)

THURSDAY
3:00—Holy Koran
3:10—Superman (Cartoon)
3:30—Sliders (Drama)
4:00—Life On The Digital Edge
5:00—French Program
6:15—Sliders
7:00—News in French
7:15—French Prog.
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Family Matters
8:00—Great Romances of the 20th Century
8:30—Dr Quinn Medicine Woman (Drama)
9:10—Oprah Winfrey
10:00—News at Ten
10:30—Film
12:00—The Boys (Comedy)

FRIDAY
3:00—Holy Koran
3:10—The Adventures of Teddy Ruxpin (Cartoon)
3:30—Treasure Hunt
4:00—French Film
6:15—The Simpsons
7:00—News in French
7:15—French Prog.
7:30—News Headlines

7:35—Fresh Prince of Bel Air
8:00—Cinema, Cinema
8:30—Babylon 5
9:10—Destination Mars
10:00—News at Ten
10:30—The X Files (Drama)
11:10—The Halifax

PROGRAMMES EN FRANÇAIS
SAMEDI
17:00—Faut pas rêver
19:00—Le Journal
19:15—Magazine L'œil de Colomb

DIMANCHE
18:00—Bonne espérance
19:00—Le Journal
19:15—E-M6

LUNDI
17:00—Thalassa
19:00—Le Journal
19:15—Magazine scientifique

MARDI
18:00—Les cœurs brûlés
19:00—Le Journal
19:15—Fractales

MERCREDI
17:00—Ushuaia
19:00—Le Journal
19:15—E-M6
20:00—Envoyé spécial

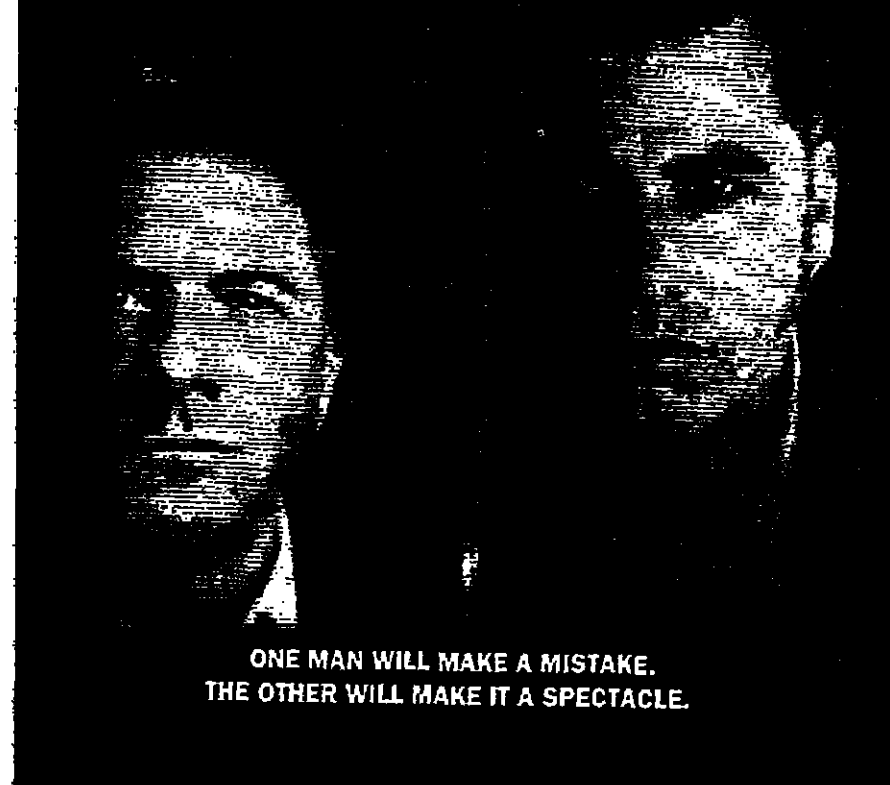
JEUDI
16:00—L'école des fans
19:00—Le Journal
19:15—Magazine L'œil de Colomb

VENREDI
18:15—Fort Boyard
19:00—Le Journal
19:15—Allô la Terre

Programs are subject to change by JTV

FILM

MAD CITY



ONE MAN WILL MAKE A MISTAKE. THE OTHER WILL MAKE IT A SPECTACLE.

"Hoffman and Travolta are sheer dynamite."

A freeway pursuit. A domestic spat gone over the edge. You're watching it live at home, news as it happens. But wait a minute. Is the reporter on your TV screen shaping the story, extending its life, making it happen? Dustin Hoffman and John Travolta team with award-winning filmmaker Costa-Gavras (*Z*, *Missing*) in a fierce tale of ratings-driven TV news gone mad. Travolta is Sam, a misguided museum guard who loses his job, then tries to get it back at gunpoint. Hoffman is Max, a local TV reporter taken hostage with a group of schoolchildren when Sam locks down the museum. It's a desperate move for Sam, a career move for Max. He's on the inside of a live exclusive. Now all he has to do is give Sam's story a heroic spin, keep a headline-grabbing network anchor (Alan Alda) at bay, and above all, keep America watching. As Max pulls the strings even tighter, the stakes grow higher, darker, and scarier.

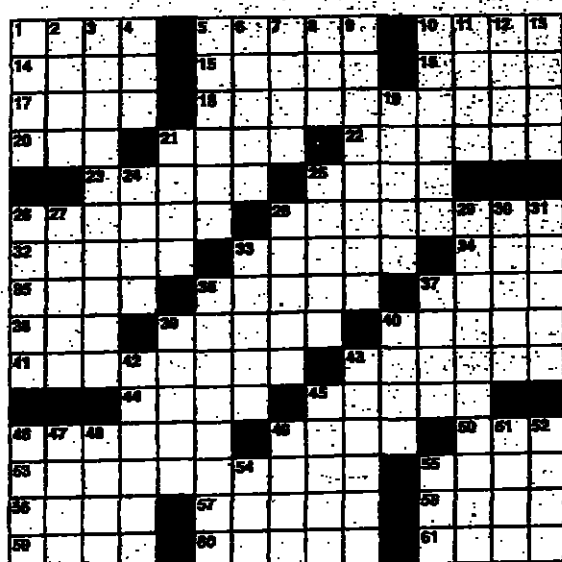
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22 Queen of regality
23 Show appreciation
25 Auctioneer's arm
26 Sedan shelter
28 Move with urgency
32 Fill with ease
33 Fashions game
34 Bygone Midwest location
35 "I Love..." fold

DOWN
1 Stupid fellow
2 Hotfoot it
3 Storm center
5 Puns or chest
6 Smart... (also 6)
7 High life
8 "a" musical
9 Practice a role
10 "House" (Dickens)
11 Fairy tale beast
12 Catch site of
13 Felines and felines
14 Current fashion
21 Indistinct
25 Eloquent words
27 Entertain
28 Gaudy
29 Peer off
30 Bombast
31 Intone
32 Cops
37 Burger booth
38 Rectal nurse
39 Musical
40 Quenchie
42 Cassie group
45 "House" (Dickens)
46 All these
47 Indiana neighbor
48 Barred baby
49 "I've" spread
51 Annoying person
52 Museum display
55 Toward the stem

OFF THE WALL

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—This Week's—
HOROSCOPES

By Linda Black

Weekly Tip: The sun is in Cancer now, shifting the focus to domestic matters. This phase will be in effect for approximately 30 days, causing most of us to want to spend more time at home.

Aries (March 21-April 19)—Study hard. You'll use what you learn as quickly as you assimilate it. A friend needs your attention.

Taurus (April 20-May 20)—Count your money and then go shopping. You need a few new tools and books to learn about in upcoming assignment.

Gemini (May 21-June 21)—You're almost in control of the situation, but your grasp is beginning to slip. Move quickly, to secure the territory you've already taken.

Cancer (June 22-July 22)—You may feel pressured but it's natural. You're about to emerge from your chrysalis, that's all. The push you get will simply help you take off and fly. **Leo (July 23-Aug. 22)**—Your team is practically invincible. Your encouragement is a big help. You may feel like something is gaining on you, however.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)—Hold onto your hat. Changes are coming fast and furious, from the top. Things are in a state of flux. Your friends have some good ideas — go along for the ride.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23)—You're sharp as a tack. Practice your favorite foreign language — you may get a chance to use it. You'll be asked some tough questions.

Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21)—Money, money, money. That's your theme. Make the most of it. Love and travel dominates, not necessarily in that order.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)—Your partner has the great ideas but the money being spent is partly yours. Better go along on that shopping trip!

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)—Work, work, work. That's supposed to be your idea of fun, right? You'll find out. Your partner will be very demanding.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)—A conversation could lead to romance. Once you have that out of the way, launch into a project together.

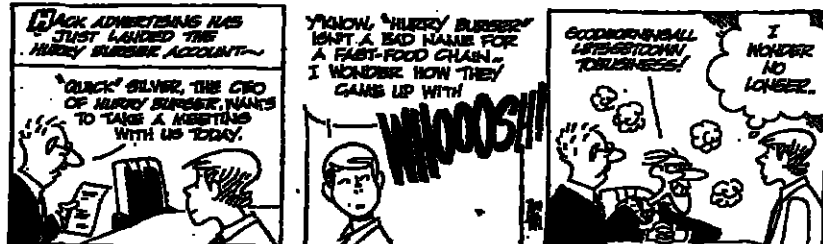
Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20)—Home and family are on your mind. You're in a snuggle mood, too. Go ahead and get a sensitive matter talked out. You'll all feel better afterwards.

If You're Having a Birthday This Week: Your theme for this year is completion, especially pertaining to paperwork. Once you get an old matter settled you'll take off like a rocket. Put your secret thoughts down on paper this year. It'll be amazingly empowering.

PERKY & BEANZ by Russell Myers



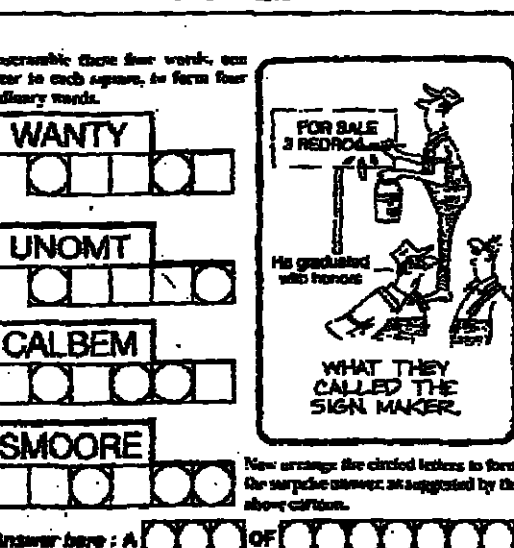
ELWOOD by Ben Thompson & Tom Korman



CATFISH by Fred Wagner & Tom Cose



Jumble



Answer: TAWNY MOUNT BHCALM MOCROE

Answer: What they called the sign maker — A MAN OF LETTERS

Words of Wisdom

An argument cannot occur if one of the two parties refuses to take part.

Why do people want to conceal their poverty when they're young and brag about it when they're older?

The wise person chooses to want less rather than to have more.

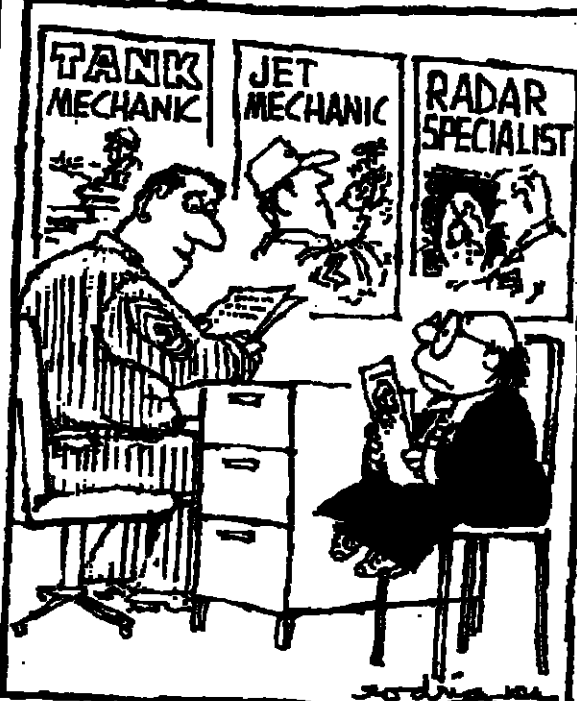
It isn't enough for a gardener to love flowers; he or she also must hate the weeds.

If you stoop to deal with idiots on their level, they will beat you every time.

When laws are not clear, they become corrupt in their interpretation.

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05.10.1998

Le Jourdain

Supplément en français du Star

Jawa, ville d'eau au milieu du désert par Véronique Abu-Nijmeh

Stuée près de la frontière syro-jordanienne, Jawa est l'une des villes qui éclosent au début de l'âge de Bronze (vers 3000 av. J.-C.), vivent quelques siècles et meurent presque aussi soudainement qu'elles ont vu le jour.

Le cas de Jawa est d'autant plus étonnant qu'elle surgit en plein désert dans un environnement qui, aujourd'hui du moins, est des plus hostiles à l'établissement de l'homme. Pourtant Jawa n'a rien d'une installation précaire. Érigée sur un promontoire, le site comprend une forteresse protégée d'un rempart dont la longueur totale est d'environ 800 mètres et percée de plusieurs portes. La citadelle est entourée d'une ville basse, elle aussi cernée d'un mur. La cité est donc doublement fortifiée. La ville basse est constituée d'un réseau dense de huttes circulaires et de maisons souterraines, type d'habitation relativement archaïque.

Le site est dépourvu de sources. Afin d'assurer l'approvisionnement en eau, les habitants ont développé un système hydraulique sophistiqué comprenant une

dizaine de réservoirs. Mais la récupération des eaux de ruissellement étant insuffisante, ils détournaient les crues des wadi alentour au moyen de véritables barrages et de canaux. Ils assuraient ainsi l'irrigation des cultures de céréales, de légumineuses et de la vigne. Rien dans le matériel archéologique ne suggère que les fondateurs de Jawa aient été des migrants venus de Mésopotamie et familiers de la civilisation urbaine comme on l'a parfois supposé. Au contraire, la population semble être très bien adaptée à l'environnement désertique. Leurs techniques de récolte et de conservation de l'eau sont identiques à celles encore en usage de nos jours. Une hypothèse surgit alors : le climat, dont l'histoire est encore très mal connue, a été pendant cette période plus humide et a incité les populations habituellement nomades à se fixer pour tirer un meilleur parti de la terre.

Jawa n'est d'ailleurs pas un exemple unique. D'autres villes de ce type sont connues en Syrie sur le versant du djebel druze. ●

Éclaboussures

Vert !

Une fleur ne suffit pas. Planter une fleur a-t-il un sens ici, dans ce pays où il n'y a que le désert ? Je pensais à tout cela sur la route qui m'emmenait à Kérak. La voix de Fairouz s'échappait du vieux autoradio du bus et rendait l'atmosphère un peu plus supportable : « Tu vois combien la mer est vaste, je l'aime de cette ampleur. Tu vois combien le ciel est loin, je l'aime de ce lointain... ». Je me suis dit : « Oh est cette mer que tu chantes si bien, chère Fairouz ? Je veux la boire à l'instant même ». Pourtant, il y a longtemps, le désert était une source d'inspiration pour les balades d'amour des poètes romantiques. Les plus beaux poèmes arabes ont été écrits ici sous ce soleil de plomb étouffant. Je pense alors à Qays Bin El-Molawah, égaré dans le désert. Il aimait sa cousine Laïla mais la père de la jeune fille lui avait refusé sa main promise à un autre. Le « fou de Laïla » a donc passé le reste de sa vie perdu dans l'immensité de sable en chantant son amour disparu.

Quelle vie romantique nos ancêtres ont vécu ! Ils ne connaissaient pas les villes tentaculaires, l'administration et surtout ces gouvernements qui veulent faire croire à leurs efforts pour arrêter l'extension du désert ou à des projets qui sont comme des gouttes d'eau dans l'océan. Que font les autorités pour « une Jordanie verte en l'an 2000 » ? Rien. Que des paroles. Le pays est de plus en plus jaune et les citoyens, de plus en plus désespérés. Et moi qui voudrais planter une fleur dans le désert. Suis-je devenu un autre Qays, serais-je cette folle qui, égarée sur cette autoroute du désert, chante des poèmes pour l'eau et un paradis verdoyant perdu ?... Brutallement la voix de Fairouz s'éteint et la chaleur s'abat sur moi comme un chène. Ma décision est prise : je ne planterai pas ma fleur car elle ne résistera pas à la sévérité de l'hiver. Mais je ne peux m'empêcher d'imaginer ce qui arriverait si quatre millions de Jordaniens plantaient une fleur à côté de la mienne. L'espoir est-il encore permis ? ■

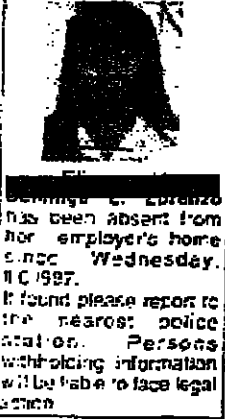
Shadin Suleiman

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MISSING PERSON



Ce avis de recherche sont fréquents dans la presse. Elles sont aussi une preuve apportée par l'employeur au Ministère de l'Intérieur pour montrer que sa domestique s'est enfuie sans autorisation. Une façon de se désresponsabiliser et de ne pas payer la caution de 500 dollars, réclamée en cas de disparition de l'employée.

Peut-on commander une domestique sri lankaise ? La réponse est oui. Dans une agence, à Abdali, une jeune femme ouvre un petit album, rempli des innombrables fiches de demandeurs d'emploi sri lankais ou philippins. Sur chacune, quelques informations sur le postulant : sa photo, son nom, son âge, son poids, sa taille, son état marital... Sa religion et même la couleur de sa peau !

La jeune femme regarde son dossier avec une studieuse attention, et demande les qualités de la domestique recherchée. « Entre 20 et 30 ans avec un peu d'expérience ». Elle se replonge dans son album et explique que beaucoup d'entre elles sont déjà « réservées ».

Elle son le fichen qui semblent nous intéresser et souligne à chaque fois les qualités de la jeune femme que l'on vient de choisir. Comme pour l'achat de n'importe quel objet. « Elle a l'air petite mais elle est forte », nous dit-elle. « Si après l'avoir essayée, elle ne vous convenait pas, vous pourriez la rendre à l'agence et nous vous en trouverons une autre », insiste un collègue.

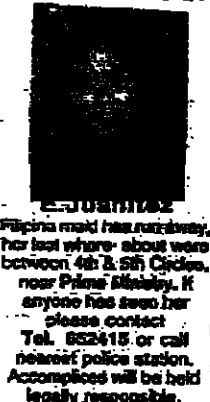
Nous leur expliquons notre inquiétude de voir ces femmes vouloir partir avant la fin de leur contrat (deux ans). Et si un proche venait à tomber malade ? Les deux « vendeurs » nous rassurent d'un rire entendu : « Ne vous inquiétez pas, vous l'amenez ici et on verra avec elle. Tout s'arrangera après sa visite à l'agence et il n'y aura plus de problème ». Et pour les « détails de livraison » ? On nous assure que le produit sera disponible sous dix jours. Quant à la commission de l'agence, elle sera constituée des deux premiers mois de salaire de

l'employée. Tout le malheur commence dans des agences comme celle-ci. Grâce à leurs contacts avec leurs homologues sri lankaises, les agences jordaniennes opèrent le lien entre des femmes désespérées et à la recherche d'un emploi en dehors de leur pays, et des familles de Jordanie. Ces agences, qui ne sont pas officiellement reconnues, sont néanmoins ignorées par le Ministère du Travail en tant qu'agences de placement. Une grande majorité d'entre elles s'enregistrent alors comme bureaux d'import/export. Mais la marchandise dans ce cas, est humaine.

Recours à la justice ? Les rouages de cette traite d'esclaves contemporains, sont bien huilés : les agences travaillent en harmonie. Une femme qui vit au Sri Lanka et qui désire gagner de l'argent pour soutenir sa famille et élever ses enfants, dépose sa candidature dans une agence de son pays. Son dossier, envoyé en Jordanie, sera proposé par une agence, à des familles à la recherche de domestiques pour leur marché. À charge de l'employeur, le paiement du permis de travail (300 dinars) et du permis de résidence (15 à 20 dinars). L'employée, de son côté, signe un contrat d'embauche souvent traduit dans un mauvais anglais et établi pour deux ans.

Une fois en Jordanie, le piège se referme sur la pauvre Sri Lankaise car sans le savoir, elle vient de débarquer dans un pays où la loi l'ignore. C'est en tout cas l'avis d'un chercheur français : « Le droit jordanien crée des situations de non droit, de non protection pour

MISSING



les travailleurs étrangers ». En effet, selon l'article 3 du nouveau code du travail de 1996, les professions de l'agriculture et du personnel de maison en sont exclues. Or Philippiens comme Sri Lankais occupent à plus de 90% des postes de domestiques. Autant dire que ces populations vivent sur le terri-

Esclaves en Jordanie

Ignorées par la loi, exploités et parfois maltraités par leur patron, les domestiques philippins et sri lankais n'ont souvent d'autre choix que la fuite. Dossier complet sur une situation honteuse dont les responsabilités sont partagées.

toire jordanien sans aucune protection ou presque. Il est toujours possible d'avoir recours à la justice, à condition de s'appuyer sur un contrat en bonne et due forme.

Il y a bien ces contrats d'embauche signés entre l'employeur et l'employé mais ils ont peu de valeur. Seule contrainte : ils ne doivent pas contenir de clauses contraires au code du travail. Le reste est laissé à l'appréciation des agences et des employeurs. Dès lors, ces bouts de papier en disent le moins possible sur les droits du personnel de maison : pas de couverture sociale, pas d'horaires de travail, pas de précision sur les congés payés. Toutes les possibilités sont ouvertes pour permettre au patron d'exploiter à merci son employé, sans qu'il puisse de toute

façon se défendre : les travailleurs étrangers n'ont pas le droit d'adhérer à des syndicats et la constitution d'associations est soumise à l'accord du Ministère de l'Intérieur, qui verrait mal un groupe de Sri Lankaises venir manifester leur colère sous ses fenêtres.

Et les ambassades ? Là, encore tout dépend de la nationalité. Vous êtes Philippin : vous êtes recruté par l'agence officielle des Philippines, votre ambassade en Jordanie conserve tous les doubles des contrats et impose un certain nombre de restrictions aux employeurs afin d'éviter les abus (salaire minimum de 300 dollars par mois, un jour de congé par semaine, 48 heures maximum de travail par semaine et une assurance maladie) et votre ambassadeur vient vous rendre visite dans le centre de détention

lorsque vous êtes victime d'une rafle (voir ci-dessous).

Loger chez son patron

Vous êtes Sri Lankais, vous n'avez que vos yeux pour pleurer. Au sein de la communauté sri lankaise, l'ambassade qui recommande un minimum de 100 dollars par mois (pour concurrencer son homologue philippin ?) est loin d'être considérée comme un refuge. Les déclarations de l'ambassadeur Rajanigan ne sont guère rassurantes.

Au total, les domestiques ne peuvent compter que sur le sens de l'humanité de leurs employeurs. En fait, tout concourt à réduire le pseudo-contrat de travail à une relation de maître à esclave, puisque la liberté de l'employé est entre les mains de celui qui l'emploie. D'où aussi

des situations différentes selon les foyers (cf. La roulette russe). Ce lien est d'autant plus aliénant que les patrons sont tenus responsables par l'État de leur personnel. Leur nom est d'ailleurs inscrit sur la carte de séjour et le permis de travail de « leur Sri Lankaise » et les contrats d'embauche précisent généralement que les employeurs doivent prendre en charge sa grossesse ou sa maladie éventuelle. Pour éviter ce genre de « désagréments », le Ministère de l'Intérieur impose que les travailleurs étrangers soient logés chez leurs garants (décret d'application de janvier 97 de la loi numéro 24 de 1973) : un bon moyen de surveiller les allées et venues du personnel et d'empêcher le développement d'une quelconque vie privée. Les histoires de Sri Lankaises interdites de sorties depuis plusieurs mois ne manquent pas.

Plates excuses après la rafle

Mercredi 30 septembre. Il est presque minuit. Des coups violents réveillent N. en sursaut. Par chance, elle s'était couchée toute habillée. Elle ouvre la porte pour éviter qu'elle soit fracturée : à peine le temps de présenter ses papiers en règle et la pauvre Philippine est embarquée par la police vers le commissariat de Zahran (près du troisième cercle) puis transférée rapidement dans un bus plein à craquer de gens comme elle, vers le centre de détention de Djebel Hussein. Des Asiatiques (Philippins et Sri Lankais essentiellement), des femmes surtout.

Combien sont-ils, parqués comme du bétail dans une sorte de grand hangar pour la nuit ? Cent, trois cents, cinq cents ou plus. Qu'importe leur nombre. Laïtés dans l'ignorance, ils vont tous passer une nuit d'attente pénible. Pas d'angoisse réelle, cependant, ils ont en ordre (permis de résidence, permis de travail). Ils seront tous libérés et rendus à leurs employeurs, venus les chercher au petit matin. « C'est toujours la même routine administrative. Que ce soit des plaques d'immatriculation de voitures ou des êtres humains, on les traite de la même manière », ironise l'un d'eux pour expliquer son parcours du combattant afin de faire sortir son employée.

Quelques jours plus tard, le gouvernement a bien présenté ses excuses pour les « événements » mauvais traitements infligés aux « réfugiés ». Mais il continue d'affirmer sa volonté de combattre le chômage jordanien en s'attaquant aux travailleurs immigrés. Bien entendu, ceux visés n'étaient pas les plus armés pour se défendre. Officiellement, les Sri Lankais et les Philippines sont moins de 5000 en Jordanie (chiffres de 1996), officiellement près de 20.000. Rien à côté des Égyptiens qui représentent 85% de la main d'œuvre

étrangère (presque 300.000 personnes). Mais on se fâche pas comme ça aux hommes et aux femmes de son grand frère arabe. Pour une simple démonstration de force, les Asiatiques étaient plus politiquement correctes.

La rafle de la semaine dernière a donc été sans violence. Une opération-tourisme qui aurait fonctionné si elle n'était pas l'œuvre de l'immigration. Mais elle a coûté à des milliers d'employés ayant cherché à régulariser leur statut, l'augmentation de 10% de leur salaire.



Le centre de détention de Djebel Hussein. Sur la photo de droite : « L'être humain est ce qu'il y a de plus précieux ».

Une prison

Ainsi tous ceux qui vivent en dehors du domicile sont illégaux, même s'ils ont des papiers en règle. Enfin dernière chaîne : les employés de maison ne peuvent quitter le pays sans une lettre de libération signée de leur employeur.

Dans la pratique, heureusement, ces hommes et ces femmes, avec l'aide d'une administration qui a longtemps fermé les yeux, parviennent à contourner des lois inhumaines. Certains travaillent pour plusieurs employeurs à la fois et ont leurs propres logements. Ils peuvent alors se consacrer à une véritable vie de famille. Certes, sans grand espoir de promotion sociale. Le chercheur français explique en effet que, d'une part les travailleurs immigrés ne peuvent prétendre à la nationalisation et que, d'autre part, depuis un décret de 1995, de nombreuses professions à forte valeur sociale (médecins, ingénieurs, enseignants...) leur sont interdites. « Imaginons une fille de Sri Lankaise qui parvient à faire des études poussées ici. Elle a peu de chance de devenir autre chose qu'une domestique ». Le séjour dans la prison « jordanienne » s'addoucit parfois mais cela reste une prison. ■

Samaa Abu Sharar

Roulette russe pour les Sri Lankais

C'est exactement comme une loterie. Vous tirez un numéro et c'est soit le bon, soit le mauvais. Pour ces Sri Lankaises, qui viennent de très loin sans savoir où elles vont arriver, c'est soit le bon patron, soit le mauvais. Tout dépend de l'employeur qu'elles auront, et de rien d'autre.

La grande majorité arrive dans un pays étranger dont elles ignorent la langue et la culture en laissant derrière elles leurs enfants, dont elles espèrent améliorer le niveau de vie. Les unes sont placées dans des familles qui les traitent comme des êtres humains, les autres se retrouvent utilisées comme esclaves.

Pour la plupart d'entre elles, le travail commence entre cinq et six heures du matin, pour s'achever entre huit et onze heures du soir. À la fin de la journée, généralement longue et épuisante, elles n'ont souvent même pas l'intimité d'une

chambre où elles peuvent être seules et tranquilles pendant la nuit. De plus, rares sont celles qui n'ont ne serait-ce qu'un seul jour de congé, ou même peuvent communiquer avec l'extérieur. Elles mangent ce qu'on leur donne et doivent parfois se contenter des restes.

Au centre de détention de Djebel Hussein, dans une petite chambre choisie par la police sans doute pour éviter l'horreur d'une cellule, nous rencontrons trois Sri Lankaises amenées par une femme policière. Toutes, trois, le visage triste, fatigué mais toujours souriant, sont détenues depuis au moins deux semaines. Ronine fait la traduction pour ses deux amis, Dina et Anoma qui parlent peu l'arabe et presque pas l'anglais. Ronine, qui accompagnait son mari, a travaillé pendant un an dans une famille de dix personnes à Amman. Suite à un problème juridique (son mari n'avait plus de per-

mis de travail, ils ont tous les deux été incarcérés. Ses employeurs, pour ne pas avoir à faire avec la police, ne veulent pas l'aider. Quant à l'Ambassade du Sri Lanka, pas de réaction. Ronine n'a pas vu son mari depuis le premier jour de leur détention, et il n'a pas la police ne semblant connaître la date de leur libération.

Dina, quant à elle, était embauchée par une famille jordanienne en Arabie Saoudite qui l'a envoyée à Amman travailler chez le fils de la famille. Pendant les trois mois en Arabie Saoudite, puis l'année en Jordanie, la famille a refusé de payer Dina.

Frappées

Un jour, elle se retrouve seule, et s'enfuit de la maison sans argent ni passeport. Une femme jordanienne l'accueille, et lui promet des papiers, de l'argent, et un billet d'avion pour rentrer chez elle après deux ans de travail. Huit mois plus tard, Dina apprend que sa mère est malade au Sri Lanka. Tout naturellement, elle veut partir la rejoindre. Sa nouvelle patronne refuse, et l'emmène directement en prison, après avoir réglé une amende de 240 dinars (un JD par jour de non possession du permis de travail). Une manière expéditive de se débarrasser d'une employée devenue gênante.

Dans le quartier chic de Deir Ghar, au sous-sol du bâtiment de l'École Française, Winea et sa femme Swarnalatha accompagnées de leurs amis Tyrone et de sa femme Ramani nous reçoivent dans leur petit mais chaleureux appartement. Winea travaille à l'École et sa femme fait le ménage chez le directeur.

n'avait pas l'argent pour la mettre en règle. Pendant ces deux années, Anoma a été frappée par la mère de famille qui ne lui donnait que très peu à manger. Anoma s'enfuit, pensant que l'Ambassade du Sri Lanka va l'aider à récupérer ses salaires impayés. Elle sera directement envoyée au commissariat.

Dans un bel appartement de Djebel Weibdeh loin de la pression du centre de détention, Aria qui vient rendre visite à sa copine Perera, évoque sa situation avec timidité. « Il y a presque sept ans que je suis avec ma patronne et elle me traite comme si j'étais sa fille et m'accorde tous mes droits », dit Aria en souriant. Une grande chambre, trois repas par jour et un jour de congé chaque semaine. Le bonheur. Malheureusement, les expériences d'Aria ne furent pas toujours si réussies. Quand elle est arrivée en Jordanie, il y a 15 ans, elle fut placée dans une famille qui la traitait mal. Pendant huit mois la mère de famille la frappait et ne lui donnait qu'un seul repas par jour, le soir. « Je me réveillais chaque jour entre cinq et six heures du matin et je travaillais jusqu'à onze heures et demi sans arrêt. Parfois je devais me réveiller pendant la nuit pour calmer le bébé avec qui je dormais », se souvient Aria.

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Winea a commencé à travailler pour l'École il y a dix ans et il gagne aujourd'hui 350 dinars : beaucoup plus que la majorité des ses compatriotes. Swarnalatha, elle, travaille à mi-temps et rentre chaque jour chez elle s'occuper de son foyer. Tyrone est employé à l'Ambassade de la Malaisie comme gardien et sa femme qui est arrivée du Sri Lanka il y a quatre mois, a été embauchée par le chargé d'affaires. Contrairement à la majorité de la communauté sri lankaise de



« Ma patronne me traite comme si j'étais sa fille », Aria (à gauche). Jordanie, les deux couples semblent avoir une vie normale. « On est content à Amman, s'enthousiasme Winea, on travaille, on gagne bien notre vie, on a droit à une vie privée ». ■ S. A. S.

«L'ambassade n'est pas un hôtel»

Au cours d'un entretien accordé au Jourdain, M. Rajanigan, ambassadeur du Sri Lanka en Jordanie, livre ses réactions face aux mauvais traitements infligés à certaines de ses compatriotes. Un verbatim accablant.

« Lorsqu'une fille vient à l'ambassade exposer un problème, nous enregistrons sa plainte et l'envoyons au « bureau » de l'immigration qui peut prendre des mesures.

L'ambassade ne peut rien faire excepté enregistrer la déposition de la jeune femme, car nous n'avons aucun pouvoir. Les deux seuls cas dans lesquels nous pouvons renvoyer la personne au Sri Lanka, sont les cas de maladie ou de décès. L'ambassade n'est pas un hôtel ou un hôpital, alors pourquoi ces femmes devraient-elles venir ici ? Ce que disent ces femmes n'est pas toujours la vérité, il y a en général deux ver-

sions des faits. Elles gagnent ici des sommes d'argent qu'elles pourraient tout aussi bien gagner à la maison, mais ces femmes viennent ici pour savoir ce qui se passe dans les autres pays. Aussi, lorsqu'elles arrivent, elles sont surprises.

Elles doivent réaliser qu'elles viennent ici en touriste. Mais elles viennent pour travailler, alors si leur employeur ne leur convient pas, elles n'ont qu'à en changer.

Si vous pouvez travailler en Jordanie, vous pouvez travailler partout ailleurs dans le monde. Car le travail est plus dur ici et les gens plus exigeants. Lorsque je suis arrivé en Jordanie, il y a deux ans, il y avait entre 40 et 50 jeunes femmes qui attendaient à l'ambassade, aujourd'hui il n'y en a plus car nous avons cessé de leur donner à manger et nous les avons dé-couragées de venir. Depuis, il y a de moins en moins de fuyardes. » ■



Ronine, Dina et Anoma étaient déjà dans le centre de détention avant la rafle de la semaine dernière. Trois histoires, trois victimes.

The Star Stadium

Edited by Abdul Hamid Addasi

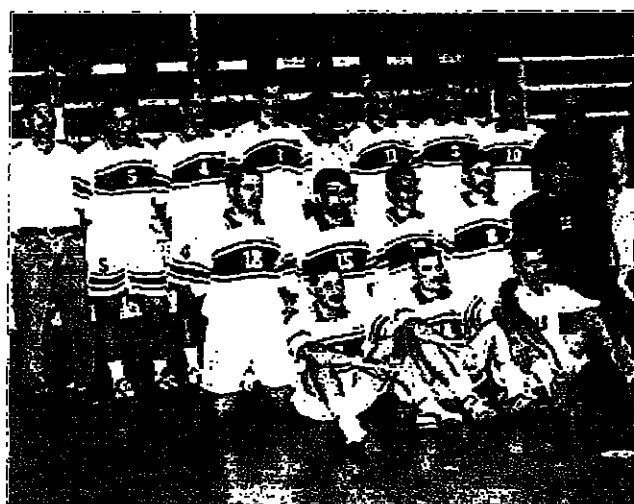
Pan-Arab Games update

New Iraqi coach for the volleyball team

■ Amman (The Star)—Amar Jabar, the current coach of the Iraqi Volleyball team, will arrive in Amman on 24 October to begin a new contract to coach the Jordanian Volleyball team. The Jordanian team failed to make a good impression during the recent Arab Championship held in Bahrain. The lost all their matches. Jabar has been the head coach of the Iraqi team for the past few years, whilst Jordan's last coach, a Cuban, was sacked because of poor results and a lack of senior team experience.

Taekwondo teams heads for Turkey:

■ Amman (The Star)—Jordan's Men and Women Taekwondo teams will leave tomorrow (Friday) for Turkey. A training camp will be held in Ankara, to prepare for the next Asian Games in Bangkok. The Jordanian members will be training against the Turkey Taekwondo team, as well as the Chinese team, which is currently training in Turkey at the moment as well. The Jordan team plan to hold another training camp in Taiwan, from 18th November to the 3rd December.



The Jordanian Handball team

Disappointing 9th place for Jordan's Handball team

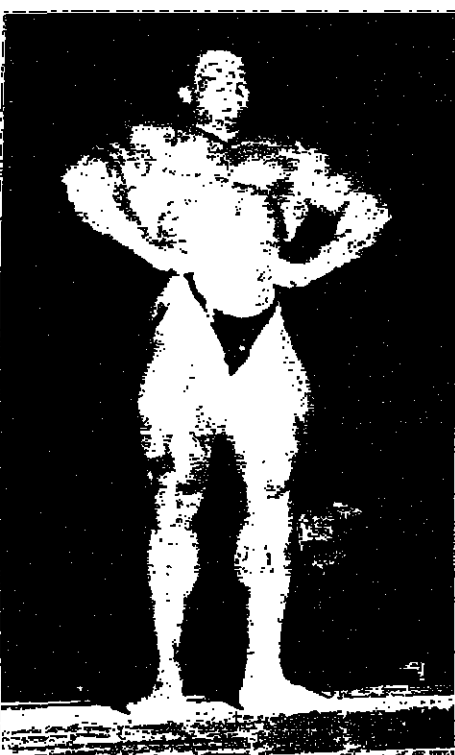
■ The Jordanian Mens Handball team returned from the first Arab Handball Cup in Bahrain last week, out of 11 countries participating, Jordan came a disappointing 9th place.

Jordan lost against Egypt, Syria, Bahrain and Morocco. The only match that Jordan won was against Lebanon, in the qualifying rounds. What was evident throughout the tournament was the lack of handball skills from the Jordanian players. The Iraqi coach, Thafer Al Saheb, will need to choose some new players in order to strengthen the squad. He will also need to work on the level of commitment and enthusiasm from the majority of the players.

Jordanian Boxers head for Syria

■ Jordan's Boxing team will hold a training camp in Syria next week, under the supervision of the Iraqi coach, Maitha Aamer. Jordan is preparing to participate in the next Arab Boxing Championship in Tunisia, starting 31 October.

Among the Jordanian team expected to excel in the championship, are of Mohammed Abu Khadejah and Ayman Al Nadi, both current Arab Champions.



The muscle mountain, Mustafa Hasanin.

Body Building in the next Pan Arab Games

■ Beirut (The Star)—The Arab Body Building Federation thanked Jordan for including Body Building in the next Pan Arab Games competition schedule.

The Arab Federation urged all Arab countries to participate in the competition, and to send their best contenders.

Jordan's Mustafa Hasanin will be our best hope of a gold medal in the next Pan Arab Games. He won the recent Asian Championships, and this week, he added the Arab and Middle East title following a competition in Ismailiah, Egypt.



Groom and horse at the Arabian Arab Horse Festival, which was held under the patronage of HRH Princess Alia bint Al Hussein

Kafroum players saluting their fans after winning the Jordanian Shield. They beat Al Hussein of Irbid twice.



Green hawks soar high in the final of Arab Mondial

By Abdul Hamid Addasi
Special to the Star

THE GREEN Hawks of Saudi Arabia were dominant at the Khalifah Stadium last week, clinching their first Arab Cup title.

Obeid Al Dossari captured the Saudi fans attention by rattling the Qatari net with three goals. His goals secured the 7th Arab Cup for Saudi Arabia, and the Top Scorer trophy for himself.

In the first half, the Saudi team stormed the Qatari defense, with a never-ending series of strikes on goal. The attacks began in the very first minute, with a threatening corner shot. This was soon followed by a long-distance shot by Yousef Al Thanien, and then a header from Abdullah Suleman.

Despite there being no goals during the first 20 minutes, the Saudis scattered the Qatari defense so much, that the outcome was inevitable.

It did not take long for the dam to burst: a mistake by the Qatari defender Ahmad Adam gave the Saudi striker Obeid Al Dossari the chance to put his team 1-0 up. It was Obeid's sixth goal in the tournament.

To their credit, the Qataris never stopped searching for the equalizer, and both Mubarak Mustafa and Adel Khamis came close with strikes. However, the Qatari passing was slow and weak, enabling the Saudis to cut them out easily.

In the second half, Qatar changed their style by speeding up their attacks: Mahmoud Al Soufi sent a strong shot which flew only a yard wide from the Saudi goal.

Yet, once again, it was Obeid Al Dossari who exploited another Qatari defensive error, when he scored his second goal, taking him top of the goal-scoring table for the tournament.

The Qatari coach decided to field Mubarak Al Kwari, in a bid to rescue the match, hoping obviously that the players decisive goal against the UAE

in the semis could be repeated.

However, Al Dossari had other plans, taking advantage of another Qatari mistake, this time made by Abdul Rahman Al Kwari, to score the third goal for the Saudis. With the hat-trick in the bag, it was no surprise when Al Dossari was later chosen as the Man of the Match.

Even after the third goal went in, Qatar never gave up hope, and their determination was rewarded with an 82nd minute goal by Mubarak Mustafa. The same player could have brought the game to nail-biting end, but he failed to score from the penalty spot in the final minute.

Kuwait take the consolation prize
Before the final at the Khalifah Stadium, Kuwait took third place in the tournament, smashing the UAE 4-1.

In the first half, the Kuwaitis dominated the match, but it was the UAE who were to score first with a right-footed shot by Mohammed Ali in the 28th minute.

Kuwait kept to their game plan, continuing to dominate the match, and eventually tied the score from a penalty kick, taken by captain Bader Haji in the 43rd minute.

In the second half, Kuwait resumed their smooth playing style, and it was not long before Basher Abdullah but Kuwait ahead. In a space of 20 minutes, Abdullah managed to add another two goals, taking Kuwait to a resounding 4-1 lead, and third place in this year's Arab Cup.

Arab Cup 98 awards
During the closing ceremony of the Arab Cup 98 the following awards were made.

Fair Play Trophy (UAE), Best Supporters (Sudan), Best Player (Mubarak Mustafa, Qatar), Best Goalkeeper (Mohammed Al Deasia, Saudia Arabia), Top goal-scorer (Obeid Al Dossari, Saudi Arabia).



Prince Sultan Bin Fayed, holds the Arab Cup trophy. This is the first time Saudi Arabia has won the event.

Football Roundup

German 1st Division match reports

B. Munich (2) B. Dortmund (2)

Bayern Munich stretched their Bundesliga lead to three points from arch rivals 1860 Munich after this exciting match.

Hansa Rostock (2) W. Bremen (1)
Oliver Neuville gave Hansa a 31st-minute lead after a blunder by Werder goalkeeper Frank Rost. Bernhard Trares equalized five minutes later after poor Rostock defending. A Matthias Breidreuz header sealed Hansa's victory in the 88th minute.

SC Freiburg (0) Hamburg SV (0)
Freiburg had the better of the play but neither side could make the most of its chances. Hamburg had the opportunity to snatch all three points with a last-minute penalty but Richard Golz saved Hans-Joerg Butt's kick.

Nuremberg (1) 1860 Munich (5)
The Munich side got off to a perfect start when striker Markus Schroth hammered home a volley from Harald Cerny's cross in the sixth minute. Bernhard Winkler added a second just before the interval. Nuremberg struck back after the break but 1860 secured victory with goals from Cerny, Michel Dinzey and Bulgarian Hristo Jovov.

VfL Bochum (0) E. Frankfurt (0)
Bochum had the better of the opening phase in a poor game with few clear-cut chances. Frankfurt improved as the game went on but a lack of firepower up front was obvious.

Leverkusen (2) Kaiserslautern (2)
Olaf Marschall and Marian Hristov put Kaiserslautern in the lead after an early goal by Brazilian Ze Roberto. Paolo Rink equalized midway through the second half to give the home side a share of the points.

VfL Wolfsburg (0) Schalke 04 (0)
The best scoring chance in a dull

match came after just 30 seconds, Schalke 04's Turkey striker Hani Mandaroli shooting just wide from close range.

H. Berlin (4) B. M'gladbach (1)
A hat-trick by Michael Preetz, who struck in the 58th, 80th and 89th minutes, helped the Berlin club score their fourth win in as many home matches.

Midfielder Sixten Veit put Berlin in front in the 13th minute, Austria's veteran striker Toni Polster equalizing 10 minutes later. Moenchengladbach lost defender Michael Klunkert in the 49th minute—sent off for a tackle from behind on Preetz.



The Egyptian, Hani Ramsay (Kaiserlautern), challenges for the ball with Paulo Rennik

English Premier League match reports

Arsenal (3) Newcastle United (0)

A crowd of 38,000 saw Dennis Bergkamp score two goals, the first in 21st minute and the second a 66th minute penalty. Nicola Anelka added to his goal tally as well, by netting in the 28th minute. Arsenal were in control for all the game, with Newcastle seeming content to defend for most of the game.

Blackburn (3) West Ham Utd (0)
Garry Flitcroft, on target in the

UEFA Cup against Olympique Lyon on Tuesday, made it three goals in five days with a brace as Blackburn eased clear of the drop zone. Flitcroft scored with a deflected shot (10) and a job (47) before Callum Davidson capped a 50-yard run by scoring the third in the 68th minute.

Coventry City (1) Aston Villa (2)
Leader Villa quickly asserted itself with midfielder Ian Taylor opening the scoring after good work from Gary Charles in the 29th minute. Taylor made it 2-0 10 minutes later, sidefooting in a cross from an offside-looking Paul Messon. Coventry's Norwegian substitute, Tord Egil Soltyved, pulled one back for the home side in the 71st minute.

Derby (0) Tottenham Hotspur (1)
Caretaker manager David Pleat took charge of Tottenham for the last time following the arrival of George Graham from Leeds and Sol Campbell ensured he signed off with a win, heading the only goal after 60 minutes. Graham watched from the stands.

Leeds United (0) Leicester City (1)
Managerless Leeds were outthought by Leicester, whose own boss Martin O'Neill is being linked with the vacant Elland Road job. Emile Heskey wasted several chances before Tony Cottee poached the winner at the near post 14 minutes from time.

Liverpool (1) Chelsea (1)
Liverpool have now failed to win in 4 games. Chelsea took the lead with a goal by Casagraghi, his first goal for Chelsea since moving from Lazio. Jamie Redknapp rescued a point for Liverpool with by scoring from a free-kick in the 83rd minute.

Middlesbrough (4) Sheffield W (0)
Danish striker Mikkel Beck was on target twice as Middlesbrough chalked up its first win of the season at the Riverside. Beck scored after 27 and 45 minutes before Colombian strike partner Hamilton Ricard bagged his eighth of the season to make it 3-0 after 49 minutes. Paul Gascoigne curled in a free kick in the last minute after Wednesday's Andy Hinchcliffe was sent off for hauling down Beck.

Nottingham Forest (0) Charlton

(1) Forest's barren run at home continued as follow promoted side Charlton grabbed the points at the City Ground. Eddie Youds scored the only goal following a fifth-minute corner to leave Forest in

the bottom three. Dougie Freedman and Steve Chettle came closest for Forest, who have scored only once in their last five league games.

Southampton (0) Man. Utd (3)
Andy Cole came in for Teddy Sheringham to pep up United's attack as it left Saints rooted to the bottom of the table with just one point. Cole crossed for Dwight Yorke to slide in the first after 11 minutes and then scored himself after a fine run from Swede Jesper Blomqvist in the 59th. Dutch substitute Jordi Cruyff volleyed the third 16 minutes from time.

Wimbledon (1) Everton (2)
Referee Paul Alcock, floored last week by Sheffield Wednesday's Paolo Di Canio, enjoyed a less stressful afternoon as Duncan Ferguson's trademark header after 59 minutes gave Everton the points. Andy Roberts had fired Wimbledon ahead after eight minutes, only for Danny Cadamarteri to equalize 13 minutes before the interval.

French 1st Division results:

Nantes (2) Lyon (0)
Bastia (2) Bordeaux (0)
Auxerre (3) Strasbourg (1)
Marseille (2) Toulouse (0)
Le Havre (3) Sochaux (0)
Montpellier (5) Lorient (1)
Rennes (2) Monaco (1)
Metz (2) Nancy (3)
Paris St. Germain (0) Lens (1)

Italian 1st Division results:

Bologna (0) Parma (0)
Fiorentina (1) Udinese (0)
Inter Milan (2) Perugia (0)
Juventus (1) Piacenza (0)
Lazio (2) Cagliari (0)
Salernitana (1) Empoli (1)
Venezia (1) Bari (0)
Sampdoria (2) AS Roma (1)

THE STAR'S WORK

Edited by Zeid Nasser

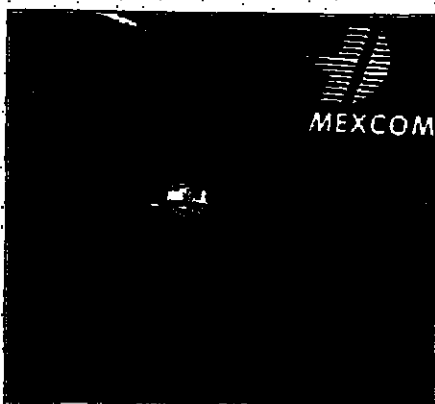
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MEXCOM 98 showcases the latest in telecom technology

THE MIDDLE East Exhibition for Communications (MEXCOM) '98 opened on Tuesday 6 October, and will run until 9 October, 1998, at the Amman International Expo Hall in Marj Al Hammam.

This is a very important event, as it has a regional and international character, with participants from Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Taiwan. In addition, there are some 30 local companies at the event; their lines of business ranging from telecommunications service providers such as FastLink, five Internet Service Providers, and telecom-



equipment.

Visitors to the show will be impressed by the high level of telecommunication services in

Jordan, and will note how much development has taken place in this field within the past year.

One presentation well worth a look is the Inmarsat display, which showcases satellite telecommunication services.

Arabsat is also running a special presentation at the event, in addition to the Jordanian Royal Air Force, who are displaying their advanced fiber optic capabilities. MEXCOM is being sponsored by the Jordan Telecommunications Co. (JTC), and co-sponsored by the Telecom Regulatory Committee, Primus, CommsMEA magazine, and TNT Express Worldwide.

450 MHz for Dual Processor Workstations and Servers: Intel's Fastest Pentium II Xeon

INTEL CORPORATION announced the fastest speed version of its Pentium II Xeon processor at 450 MHz, designed for use in dual-processor (two-way) workstations and servers. The new processor is expected to accelerate the strong early industry acceptance of Pentium II Xeon processor-based workstations and servers. Dual processor (two-



way) workstation and server customers are migrating their most mission-critical, demanding applications to systems based on the Pentium II Xeon processor. Like other members of the Pentium II Xeon processor family, the new Pentium II Xeon at 450 MHz processor delivers industry leading performance from its larger and faster Level 2

(L2) caches, multiprocessing capabilities and a 100 MHz system bus. The combination of the pure performance of the Pentium II Xeon processor and the system's scalability brings exceptional levels of price and performance to the two-way server and workstation market segments.

The 440GX AGPset for workstations and servers, with one or two processors, provides 2GB memory support and the fast AGP graphics.

Zaknet adds new dimension to the Internet

ZAKNET HAS introduced a new package of exciting services, which will help users to reduce communication costs, and increase the speed of accessing data. ZakNet offers two types of services:



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The latest news from around the world viewed through tickers can be set up to scroll continuously on the user's screen. Users can customize the tickers to include favorite stocks, sports events, and news items.

Live Streaming Video

ZakNet will bring you live coverage of the most popular business and news channels delivered right into your PC. Simply click, and news will come to you live with picture and sound.

Corporate Media Broadcast
It is ideal for companies who need to deliver large amounts of data to many sites on a regular basis. ZakNet can provide a dedicated and secure channel to broadcast data or video to all offices covered by the AsiaSat 2 footprint (Asia, Middle East, and parts of Africa & Australia). For a live demonstration of ZakNet's "Internet Plus" and "Broadcast Internet," please visit our stand (J6-3) at Hall No.6.

worldwide and often introduces the latest technologies in its machines, in record time and at competitive pricing. For more information on Dell products in Jordan, contact Specialized Technical Services (STS), on telephone 5827611.

News update

STS is the Dell distributor for Jordan

Specialized Technical Services (STS) has been appointed as the sole distributor for Dell in Jordan.

Dell is a leading PC supplier

worldwide and often introduces the latest technologies in its machines, in record time and at competitive pricing.

For more information on Dell products in Jordan, contact Specialized Technical Services (STS), on telephone 5827611.

Dell is a leading PC supplier

INTERFACE

BY ZEID NASSER

Web entrepreneurs emerge in Jordan

THE WEB development scene in Jordan is more active than ever. Contrary to some predictions—that clients would find ways to create their own Web sites in-house—demand for Web design, publishing and development has soared.

Companies in the Web design field like CNS (Primus), Access to Arabia, Business Optimization Consultants (BOC), and Arabist have made their presence felt and now enjoy a sizable amount of business.

What is very pleasing is that all these companies are run by young entrepreneurs, all of whom embody the international trend for young, tech-minded people who are succeeding in changing the face of their local economies. Of course, I wouldn't go that far in describing the Jordanian Web specialists, but it is fair to say they are rejuvenating the local 'business environment'.

As the situation stands today, there are no huge Web design companies, employing tens of programmers or designers.

What we have is a number of small and medium sized firms, each handling some 15 to 20 Web projects at one time with teams of three or four designers and web developers.

A very interesting trend is the emergence of interactive design and very-technical programming firms, whose expertise in Web development covers the somewhat complex areas of advanced Web development languages.

These companies are actually exporting their skills, as most of their work comes from outside Jordan. Clients are mainly from the Gulf, but a small number of clients are based in Europe and the USA. This is quite thrilling, considering Jordan's relatively under-developed status in information technology.

One company based in Amman, called One World Software Solutions, is very prominent in this respect. Also, a new company called SYNTAX is producing some interactive Web design work of international standard.

Of course, there are a number of negative aspects to the local Web market. The main problem faced by the Web design firms is the cut-throat price war. Although it is to everybody's benefit that the rates for Web design services remain as they are—around JD 700 on average for a basic site with a few pages—some firms are even going lower, offering rates as low as JD 400. This is going to have devastating effects.

However, at this stage, clients are somewhat generous in allocating funds for Internet and Web services. So, there should still be enough business to go around for high or low price suppliers of Web design services.

The point to remember is that there is a serious 'brain-drain' taking place, in which talented Jordanians in the different fields of Internet services are leaving the country, taking attractive offers in countries like the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar. So, there is need to retain these skills and talents.

Still, I don't think this poses a real threat to our local Web development industry, especially as more firms take on jobs or projects from outside the country.

For now, it is nice and comforting to know that we have such advanced Internet/Web design and development services in Jordan.

In a way, it feels like that we have truly entered the cyber-age with professionals who have taken on its challenges.

Even winning the 'heart' of Intel's Chairman: The iMac is everyone's favourite

THE IMAC, Apple's latest Macintosh, has rekindled user emotions about computers; something we haven't seen for over a decade!

Even the chairman of Intel, Andy Grove, who is in charge of a company that produces the processors for the competing platform, expressed his 'affection' for the iMac.

Speaking to Time magazine, Andy Grove commented that, "His vision for the computer of the future looks a lot like Apple's new iMac. It embodies a lot of the things I've been talk-

ing about. Sometimes what Apple is doing may have an electrifying effect on the rest of us. It's nothing we couldn't have done, but Apple went ahead and did it."

Apple's iMac, it should be noted, is built around processors made by Motorola, not Intel.

These words of flattery for the iMac correspond well with the huge level of appreciation shown by users all around the world. Buyers have been queuing all over the United States since the machine's launch, and the machine's

an amazing sales record with the iMac. In August, it was the second top selling personal computer in the US, raising Apple's retail share by 13.5% from a mere humble 6.8%. Apple has never been able to sell so many units of one model in one month!

What is very interesting is the fact that it is not only Mac fans who are buying the iMac. It has been estimated that around 15% of all sales are to first-time buyers, while 12% of buyers are 'converts' from Windows/Intel based PCs.

The question now is whether or not the iMac can maintain the same level of sales when the enthusiasm dies down and when the iMac has to perform, rather than just look great! It should be remembered that Windows/Intel PCs are reaching sub-\$1000 prices compared to the iMac's \$1,300 price tag. Only time will tell. For now, Apple is content to ride on this wave of appreciation for the iMac. Tens of thousands of users have, for the first time, a favourite computer, the iMac.

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Short, shorter, shoriest!

By Rashid Al Roussan
Special to The Star

YUNIS DAWOOD Al Adwan is reportedly the shortest man in the world, following the death of Jewlie Mohammed, who entered the Guinness Book of Records as the shortest man ever. Al Adwan—the 27-year-old little man who runs a supermarket in Shifa Badran—is due to take the title very soon.

Al Adwan made it clear that he is not satisfied with the media coverage of his story. He added that officials in Jordan have not even provided him with medical insurance. "I do not get treated like a normal person, and the government doesn't provide people like me with the basic needs of life," he goes on to say.

With a height of just 65 cm, Al Adwan will become a worldwide celebrity. "When I take the Guinness record, I will feel more confident and will become more appreciated," he told *The Star*.

In addition to watching birds, he would like to travel around the world. His unquenched thirst is to go

abroad and work normally like other citizens.

Al Adwan's social relationships are anything but short! He enjoys the company of many people, and he is fun to talk to.

Soon, he will become one of the biggest headlines in Guinness history. ■



Photo by Gorge Kazanyan

Mozart with a twist from the Middle East

By Mark Swed
RAHSAAN ROLAND Kirk, the wildly imaginative reed player, claimed he did something for the first time in the history of Western music when he performed 'Sentimental Journey' on one saxophone and the melody from the slow movement of Dvorak's 'New World' Symphony on another at the same time. You have to split the brain in two parts, he told the audience at the Village Vanguard in 1970 (a live performance recently reissued on 32 Jazz). "It's like making one part of your mind say, 'oob la di' and making the other part of your mind say, 'What does he mean?'"

Kirk may have been first, but he is hardly last. On one track of a new Mozart recording, 'oob la di' is a Nubian singer performing an Arabic lullaby, while the other side of the brain is presented with a lullaby that Mozart remembered his nurse singing here performed by a Western concert pianist. What does it all mean? Plenty.

The two melodies, from disconnected cultures—sung with different kinds of vocal production, don't exactly join seamlessly. But the sensibilities are close, and the effect is startlingly beautiful. These two disembodied solo voices float in an ether, somewhere outside conventional geography or history. We can hear that they are saying the same thing in the same way with different accents, as if they embodied the very soul and essence of the human condition, according to LA Times-Washington Post News Service.

This extraordinary collaboration is part of a recent CD entitled 'Mozart in Egypt', which discovers one revelatory way after another to relate Mozart with Arabic music. The concept by Hughes de Courson and Ahmed el Maghraby is not only not far-fetched but practically inevitable. Mozart loved Egypt, and the notes tell us that Egyptians love Mozart.

There are problems, of course, in trying to marry Mozart and Egypt. Western music takes pride in the vertical arts of harmony and counterpoint. Arabic music is linear, one event following another. The result then is what the producers describe as a 'crazy diagonal'.

And yet it works. There is a perfor-

mance of the slow movement of Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 23, in which an oud (the ancestor of our lute) joins the piano in dialogue, mostly playing Mozart. Mozart sounds just fine on the oud, and its way of decorating a melodic line is not at all dissimilar to the Western approach. Best of all is hearing the piano and oud together, when one player takes the melodic line, the other harmony.

Perhaps this diagonal isn't so crazy after all but is actually the way of the Postmodern world. Indeed, in the early '70s, just the time Kirk was experimenting with his own diagonals, Ihab Hassan, a literary theorist at the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee, found himself torn between his Egyptian heritage and attraction to clean, minimalist Modernism. This led him to search out a synthesis for the spirit of his time, a spirit he thought best represented by the global tastes of Robert Rauschenberg, Buckminster Fuller, John Cage and Marshall McLuhan.

From this, Hassan developed some of the first theories of Postmodernism. Such connections are not, of course, entirely new. Mozart, as many Viennese did in his day, had a passion for Egypt. He titled an early opera (which survives only in sketch) 'The Goose of Cairo'. Midway through his career Mozart wrote incidental music to the drama 'Thamos, King of Egypt'. And at the end of his short life, he produced his Masonic opera, 'The Magic Flute', which is full of Egyptian symbolism.

Today, 25 years after Hassan's first essays on Postmodernism, cultures have become interconnected like never before. But still, 'Mozart in Egypt', released on British label EMI, can give a listener shivers as it dem-

onstrates one way after another of combining 18th century music's Classicism with ancient Arabic traditions. Nothing quite prepares one for just how compelling the Symphony No. 25 can sound in seven-eighths time or for how comfortably Arabic musicians on traditional instruments can jam with violin, viola, cello and clarinet in and around Mozart chamber music.

The deeply moving final selection is from Mozart's Requiem and it will, I suspect, continue to haunt me for a very long time.

It begins with the sound of breathing, meant to induce a peaceful trance as part of Islamic Dhikr ceremonies. Sheikh Mohammed Al Helbany begins a sacred song that segues into the first bars of Mozart's Requiem. Later we hear a child soloist in the Mozart answered by a Coptic song sung by an Arabic child, music that once accompanied the embalming of mummies. The joining of spirits of the living and the dead, of spirits from East and West, of the spirits of our time and ancient times, of the voices of children is profound. This is music a divided world desperately needs.

Since EMI has chosen not to import this disc (you'll have to order it via your record store), maybe Warner should try to obtain it, because it is a perfect prologue for a new CD of Mozart piano sonatas released on Warner's jazz label, Atlantic. The performances on 'Mozart: Piano Sonatas and Variations' are by controversial young Turkish pianist Fazil Say. These are not jazz renderings, but Say is also a jazz player and Atlantic's founder, Turkish-born record company legend Ahmet Ertegun, has

shown an interest in him. Say is something very few Mozarteans are anymore, a genuinely ethnic interpreter. Indeed, the most elegant Mozart piano playing is rarely tied to nationality and can come from just about anywhere, be it Japan (Mitsuko Uchida) or Russia (Alexei Lubimov), almost as if the cultivated Viennese style has covered the Earth like a thin layer of sweet schlag. Yet Mozart himself branched out musically as much as his times would allow him. He also had an infatuation for Turkish music (as did Beethoven, who included a Turkish march even in 'Ode to Joy' of his Ninth Symphony, and other composers of the time), his opera 'The Abduction From the Seraglio' is Turkish, and the popular Piano Sonata in A Major, K. 351, which Say completes his recital disc, is known as 'The Turkish' for its finale.

Say is not a genteel Mozartean, although there is indication that he could be if he wanted. Every now and then he will break off from a generally percussive style of playing and toss off a phrase, or maybe just an ornament, with a disconcerting air of sweet, delicate refinement.

Yet, Say mainly—who also presents the sonatas in B-flat Major, K. 333, and C Major, K. 330, as well as the Variations on 'Ah, vous dirai-je, maman', (or, if you will, 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star')—goes in for more clangor than most listeners may be accustomed to. This is visceral, rhythmically emphatic playing. The tone is cold and steel, only a hard-edged, close-up recording only exaggerates (presumably intentionally). Tempos can be willfully unconventional (slow or fast). The Turkish finale of the A-Major Sonata is almost as metallic as some of the examples on 'Mozart in Egypt'.

These sonatas have been recorded dozens upon dozens of times, and they regularly find their way into the repertoire of beginning piano students, so it should hardly worry us if Say intends to be different. Especially since the brightness of sound and the clutter make us feel that drums and cymbals and reeds are not far away. ■



Sure and seductive route into spring

By Brenda Polan

ONE OF the advantages of peering six months into fashion's future is that the information you acquire can serve as a warning of sharp rocks of change ahead.

The prudent can then batten down their wallets and refuse to invest in today's styles that will soon be outdated. But if calm seas are shown to be in prospect with only a subtle refinement of the present you can shop now with some confidence.

The spring clothes shown last weekend at London Fashion Week, the biannual round of catwalk shows and selling exhibitions in South Kensington, in the main provided unalloyed reassurance.

Some of the less commercially minded younger designers, it is true, did head off into strange and scary territory, but a perfunctory nod and a politely muttered "interesting" will have to satisfy the likes of Tristan Webber, Andrew Groves and Sean McGowan.

The designers to be taken seriously, however, gave us a wonderfully seductive progres-

sion from the clothes of this autumn and winter. Apart from the almost ubiquitous white, grey will still be the most important staple colour, mostly pale and pearly but also as a melange of black and white in light spring worsteds and speckled linen-based tweeds. Black persists, very often used with white or interleaved between two layers of white or palest chiffon or organza. And, navy will be back and in its darkest, most sophisticated shades.

These essentially urban colours are all given either a fluid softness or a fragile pretiness, which plays against their normal rather formal character. The resulting clothes are feminine without being too girly, grown-up without any aggressive "executive-babe" pomposity. Many of the fabrics used for daywear are those we conventionally think of as evening-wear—high-shine satin, chiffon, tulle and organza—but the diaphanous are doubled, lined or layered to maintain respectability while hinting at the lingerie drawer.

Lingerie details remain important. Lace and threaded-

through ribbon compete with applique, beading and embroidery for attention. The knitwear, in particular, resembles the kind of delicate ribbon-decked bedjackets convalescent ladies used to wear to receive visitors.

The prettiest embroideries, usually with a hint of Lurex or rhinestone glitter, are to be found on the eternally romantic clothes from Helen David (formerly English Eccentrics), Tanya Same at Ghost, Workers for Freedom and Clements Ribeiro. The most spectacular are Matthew Williamson's in his signature hot colours of fuchsia, orange, peacock and royal blue.

To curtsy this burden of decoration, shapes tend to be simple like Ghost's Jane Austen high-waisted dresses or Helen David's streamlined tunics and the easy 1920s straight gowns from both David and Clements Ribeiro.

There was a consensus on the new importance of the diagonal, used in its most sophisticated form by Owen Gaster, a young designer who has been moving season by season and with great sureness towards a confident, mature

style. In lustrous fabrics, he cut sharp trouser suits with narrow, torso-defining jackets logically into restrained asymmetric effects.

Origami was Hussein Chalayan's obsession. Each season he worries away at a single theme. His basic pale organza shift dress was in keeping, in its austere innocence, with the mood of many of his peers but its almost imperceptible variations more layered front panels, a neckline varying to the left an inch, a transparent panel where an opaque had been were hardly enough to keep you interested in the outcome.

Alexander McQueen represents the opposite extreme. He numbs your perceptions by piling on second-rate theatrics and attention-getting ploys which are always in doubtful taste. A mental edit, however, always repays the effort. For spring he has tailored romantic, dandyish trouser suits and long jackets with swooping coat-tails in glossy, burnished fabrics. Against their metallic strictness he juxtaposed the softness of frilly, luxurious lace.

Though there will be plenty of earth tones to choose from, putty, beige, ecru, string, buttermilk, sand and khaki—one's covetousness was most seriously aroused by the maidently white and cream and the hint-of-tint pastels.

They linger in the memory: Betty Jackson's Suzanne Lengen white cotton dresses and silky, palest green coat, Antonio Berardi's sexy fencer's boudoir if you can take it, merely sensuous if you can't. Hemlines: everywhere from mid-thigh to ankle but rarely even or straight. Trousers: from skimpily cropped and leggings-like to wide and shoe-enveloping. Shoes: flats, often quite chunky, for day, kitten heels and full-blooded stilettos for evening. Jewellery: fine and fragile, mostly glistening liquid silver. Snatch up a Lara Boring necklace now and segue into spring, when it comes, without a qualm. ■

Financial Times
Syndication

A naked eye

By Robin Givhan

THE ACTION on the catwalks of New York has become commonplace. The models have become familiar faces, even household names; and the clothes, no matter how revealing or theatrical, rarely even raise an eyebrow anymore. Fashion's grand gestures no longer shock or impress. Instead, it's the unguarded moments and the behind-the-scenes chaos that intrigue us. We want models without makeup, designers dropping their editors revealing their emotions, photographers losing their patience.

Those are the images captured by Washington Post photographer Lachar Perkins in his new book, *Runway Madness*. (The pictures will also be on exhibit at the New Museum in Arlington, USA, until 15 November). The collection of images spans a decade of fash-

ion, and through these pictures, the fashion show has become an intimate affair attended almost exclusively by industry insiders. Today, of course, these presentations are media events that lure the famous and the infamous.

Fashion now dominates popular culture. It has become the place where social commentary, entertainment and even politics intersect. Fashion models lead humanitarian missions abroad, designers' collections have become barometers of our tolerance for diversity, and the manufacturing of clothes has transformed into volatile Wall Street investment opportunities. Fashion has a new gravity that is both welcome and daunting.

Individually, Perkins' photographs capture the nuances of this new fashion world, collectively, they help to explain how this new fashion order came to be. ■

JEWELLERY ARA-BIA—the most prestigious exhibition designed for the Gulf jewellery market—this year lists more international exhibitors of world repute than ever before. The show, which will take place from 4-7 November at the Bahrain International Exhibition Center, features a glittering list of famous jewellers. Sophisticated and valuable jewellery and watches being shown will include pieces by Piaget, Chopard, Bulgari, Ambrosi Gioielli, Harry Winston, Tag Heuer, and Eterna.

